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OUR FIRST-BORN.

SHE came, an angel in our sight,
We took her as a gift from Heaven;
She gave our home a new delight,
Our hearts' best love to her was given.

We harvested her every look,
And watched the wonder in her eyes;
What constant loving care we took,
How patiently we soothed her cries.

Her lineaments how closely conned;
Each parent sought the other there,
Foretelling her brunette or blonde,
With golden, or with raven hair.

Her tiny hands, her tiny feet,
A sculptor's dream, despair and aim;
Did even Nature form more sweet
In frail perfection ever frame?

Her name, a lily name of love,
To match her loveliness of life;
Or some dear name one, now above,
Has left with fragrant memories rife.

We watched her grow from day to day,
More sweetly than a flower in June,
More swiftly than a leaf in May
Unfolds itself to greet the noon.

The mandate of her outstretched hands,
When first she knew a loving face,
Was mightier than a queen's commands,
And dearer than her proffered grace.

Her keen delight, her artful ways,
When the faint light began to dawn, —
Great pictures fade, but memory stays
O'er little scenes that love has drawn.

Then came at length the crowning bliss;
How oft, the babe upon her knee,
The mother sighed with yearning kiss,
"When will my darling speak to me!"

The first sweet sounds of broken speech,
The first dear words that love inspires,
How weak to these, the heart to reach,
The music of a thousand lyres!

The eager questions, quaint replies,
The awakening of the childish mind,
The queries that perplex the wise,
The griefs and joys that children find.

And so she grew still more and more,
Our angel guest, our gift from Heaven,
Our first-born child, for whom the store
Of love waxed more, the more 'twas given.

Nor this alone; but, like the cruise
That fed of old the prophet guest,
No danger now that we should lose
The mated love of either breast.

Nay more, — by subtler creeds beguiled,
We learnt with joy the simpler word,
That he who tends a little child
Is worshipping our blessed Lord.

Macmillan's Magazine.

THE LANGUAGE OF THE SEA.

WHERE'ER, beneath the scudding clouds,
The good ship braves the blast
That, roaring through the quivering shrouds,
Flies furiously and fast —
Where Stars and Stripes and Union Jack,
To every sea-gull known,
Career along the ocean's track,
Our English holds its own.
Our English tongue to every shore
Flies onward, safe and free;
It creeps not on from door to door,
Its highway is the sea!

Oh! glorious days of old renown
When England's ensign flew,
Nail'd to the mast, till mast fell down
Amid the dauntless crew —
When Rodney, Howe, and Nelson's name
Made England's glory great,
Till every English heart became
Invincible as fate.
God rest the souls of them that gave
Our ships a passage free,
Till English, borne by wind and wave,
Was known in every sea!

Our ships of oak are iron now,
But still our hearts are warm;
Our viking courage ne'er shall bow
In battle or in storm.
Let England's love of freedom teach
The tongue that freemen know,
Till every land shall learn the speech
That sets our hearts aglow.
Long may our Shakespeare's noble strain
Float widely, safe and free;
And long may England's speech remain
The language of the sea!
Academy. WALTER W. SKEAT.

TWO LITTLE FEET.

OH life, so prodigal of life!
Oh love and destiny at strife!
Oh earth, so full of busy feet!
Oh woods and hills and all things sweet!
Was there no room amidst you all
For two more feet, so soft and small?
Didst envy me, where thousands sing,
The one bird that made all my Spring,
My dove, that had so many ways
Of making beautiful life's days?
No room! Or rather it may be
Earth was too small t' imprison thee.
God only knows. I know I miss
Thy sweet caress, thy loving kiss,
The patter of thy dear small feet,
Thy hand in mine through lane and street;
While all that now remains to me
Is just a precious memory.
Two little feet, 'neath earth's brown sod,
Two white wings somewhere safe with God.
Chambers' Journal. LAURA HARVEY.

From Blackwood's Magazine.

THE RUSSIANS ON THE PAMIRS.

THE Russian advance towards India has been compared to the opening of parallels against a besieged city. The first parallel, a line of observation, was the old Caspian and Orenburg frontier of half a century ago. The second, from the south of the Caspian along the Persian and Afghan frontier to the head-waters of the Oxus—a line of menace. A third parallel is now being attempted, from the north-eastern corner of Afghanistan along the north of the Indian Empire—a line intended to cut off communications and check a sally of the garrison. Such are the strategical aims we assign to the recent display of restless activity by Russia on the Pamirs and in the direction of eastern Turkistan.

A brief survey of the present position of central Asia will help to an understanding of the opportune nature of Russia's recent movements. Obtaining her own way along the Russo-Persian frontier, and working by assimilation rather than by absorption, she has as yet failed to make any impression save one of hostility upon the Afghans. The new boundary, jealously guarded as it has been by the ameer, has steadfastly repulsed all advances; and Abdurrahman's well-known severity has restrained his lawless subjects from affording pretexts for Russian interference in a manner that is marvellous to those who remember what was the condition of Balkh-Turkistan not very many years ago. Repelled all along the line from the Zulfikar Pass to Khwajasalar on the Oxus, the superfluous activity of the Russian adventurers has been driven to find an outlet in another direction. It is no small triumph for the British government that it should have so far succeeded in circumscribing Russia's action, in regions where her activity was full of danger to the peace of Asia, as to force it to seek an outlet in a locality so futile as the Pamirs. But there are other reasons in the air why Russia should at present cast her eyes eastward from Khokand and Samarkhand. Her keen perception has not failed to notice the growing troubles of China, the internal turbulence of the Chinese,

and the difficulties in consequence created between the Peking government and the great civilized powers. The possibility of a European and American demonstration in Chinese waters has for some time been in prospect—may even yet become a political necessity. In the interchange of diplomatic views which has taken place among the powers, Russia has, we believe, been careful to keep aloof from any project for coercing the Chinese. When the moment arrives for the powers to call China peremptorily to account, Russia has her own card to play. What her aims are on the Primorsk frontier we do not profess to know; but there can be little question that as soon as China finds her hands full elsewhere, Russia will endeavor to make herself mistress of eastern Turkistan. For some years past there have been significant indications in the straws that float upon the surface of her Asiatic currents; of workings in that direction. Not the least notable of these was the selection of General Kuropatkin for the central Asian government. As long ago as 1876 Kuropatkin made himself thoroughly acquainted with eastern Turkistan when he visited Kashgar as chief of the embassy despatched by General Kauffmann to Yakub Beg; and while there he distinguished himself by compiling a very exhaustive work on the country. Afterwards, when occupying a post on the general staff at St. Petersburg, Kuropatkin's duties were specially devoted to eastern Turkistan and the Trans-Oxus region; and his intimate knowledge and experience of the countries beyond the Himalayas mark his selection for the most important post in central Asia with a significance which we cannot afford to overlook. The whole conclusions of Kuropatkin's work on Kashgaria pointed to a desire on the part of Russia to annex Yarkand-Kashgar.

We saw in Kashgaria [he says] a powerful Mussulman State, to which as to a centre would be drawn the sympathy of the population, not only of the weak Mussulman States which had preserved their independence, but also that of the population of the provinces which we had conquered. The importance of Kashgaria, in our eyes, was moreover increased in consequence of the attempts of the

English to draw this country to their side, so as to incorporate it (1) in a neutral zone of countries which was to separate Russia from India, and (2) to acquire in Kashgaria a fresh market for the sale of their manufactured goods.*

At the time of Kuropatkine's mission there seemed every prospect of a Russian occupation of Kashgar being early and easily brought about. But the death of Yakub Beg, the reconquest of Kashgar by the Chinese, and the check administered to Russia over Kuldja, compelled the latter to keep her designs on eastern Turkistan in the background. But she has been all the while waiting for her opportunity, and there is reason to believe that in the increasing embarrassments of China she desecres that opportunity in the immediate future.

But what, it may be asked, has all this to do with the Pamirs question? Well, the Pamirs question, like most other questions, has two sides to it, and Kashgar-Yarkand is one side, Badakshan-Wakhan is the other, and a very important side this latter is, as we shall see later on. Meanwhile let us bestow a little consideration on the Pamirs themselves, on Russia's relationship to them, and on the advantages which an established footing upon them would afford her.

In 1865 the subject of the Pamirs was mooted in a conversation between M. Stremouchoff, the then director of the Asiatic Department at St. Petersburg, and Mr. Saville Lumley, when, in view of the complete annexation of Khokand, the Russian minister discussed the chances of Russia having to enter the mountains south of that khanate, at the same time ridiculing a possibility of any advance on Kashgar through the mountains. Russia was accordingly allowed to extend her sway up the defiles of the Alai Tagh and on to the Kizil Art ranges, embracing the whole of the Pamir Khargashi, with its great lake of Kara-kul. To this acquisition as a natural adjunct to her conquest of Khokand no exception can justly be taken, though it does not seem as yet to

have been of much account to her. Such Kara-Khargiz as are to be found in this region are tributary to the Russian government, who confirms the election of their khans, keeps peace among the different tribes, and finds frequent employment for the men in pioneering and exploring expeditions. In 1887 the Russians had a post established at Sufi-Khurgane, at the mouth of the Taldik Pass; and we may expect, when Captain Younghusband's full reports are received, to hear of outposts much farther south than that. Practically there is nothing to restrain her energy in that direction until she reaches the Hindu Kush. We believe that a superstition exists in the Foreign Office that Russia is confined by an agreement to the north of Lake Victoria, on the Great Pamir and the Panjah River. We much fear, however, that this pact, like so many of the late Lord Granville's central Asian "agreements," was more the expression of a pious wish on the part of the British government that Russia would pause there, than a binding obligation that can stand the wear and tear of time and circumstances. It is contained in a despatch from Prince Gortchakoff in January, 1873, accepting the Afghan boundary which Lord Granville had suggested. Now, as Russia never took the slightest subsequent account of Lord Granville's boundary or of its own assent thereto, and as the agreement has been effaced in all other respects, it can hardly be supposed that it will weigh heavily with her upon the head-waters of the Oxus and the shores of Lake Victoria. The agreement was keenly criticised at the time by the government of India, and most of its objections have been fully sustained since then by the conduct of Russia. Moreover, when the government of India very soon after pressed upon Lord Granville to make proposals to the Russian government to have the frontier on the northern and western borders of Yarkand defined—a proposal which would have led to a further delimitation of the Pamirs—the Foreign Office evaded the request. Russia has thus been left with a free hand on the Pamir steppes, and it is idle now to raise an outcry because she has availed herself of it.

* Translated by Major W. E. Gowan, Her Majesty's Indian Army.

Of much more importance than any imaginary line drawn through the Pamirs is the clear recognition which her Majesty's government, both in London and Calcutta, have of the presence of the Russians upon the Roof of the World, and of the difficulties which may arise in consequence. On this occasion, at all events, we have not been caught napping. If the Prjevalskys, the Pevtsoffs, and the Grombtchevskis have been active, so also have the Young-husbands and the Davidsons and other officers, including those unobtrusive but valuable men, the native officials of the Indian Surveys. Within our own sphere, and not a little out of it, we are quite as well informed about the debatable ground as Russia is, and quite in a position to discuss with her disputable points of central Asian geography. And we have already turned our knowledge to practical account. If General Medinski led an expedition into the Pamir in 1883, we on our side completed a military survey of the passes leading into Kashmir, and soon followed this measure up by advancing our outposts to Gilgit. Sir William Lockhart's reports on the passes of the Hindu Kush is not likely to be made public, but we may assume that while it guarantees us from an attack in force being delivered against India by way of Kashmir, it leaves open the possibility of annoyance in that quarter—annoyance that might amount to absolute danger in the event of an Indian army being engaged in high Asia. Meanwhile our post of observation at Gilgit is our main security in this direction. We have already been able to make our influence felt by the petty chiefs of the Chitral and Baltistan country, and we shall in no long time establish order and security up to the gates that lead to the higher waters of the Oxus. The Hansa and Nagar chiefs who successfully defied the maharajah of Kashmir's authority, and who holds the mouths of two important passes, will be checked by running a military road through their territories. The Chitral chief's loyalty is testified to by M. Bonvalot, who was stopped in his country until permission to advance could be received from Simla. Yassin is another chiefship that may be counted upon as long as there

are troops at Gilgit; but Kunjut is a petty state lying towards the eastern side of the Baroghil Pass that may occasion some trouble to Colonel Durand. M. Bonvalot, who was unable to penetrate into Kunjut, was told that the khan had killed his own father for wishing to make over the country to the English, and had sent messengers to the Chinese Taotai at Kashgar with proffers of friendship, who sent him back presents in return. Yet two years ago the khan received Captain Young-husband with great kindness, while that officer was on his exploring expedition to the regions beyond the Karakorum and Mustaj passes, in the course of which, it may be remembered, he first encountered Captain Grombtchevski on the Tajdambash Pamir.

We may thus conclude that all has been done that is immediately necessary to close the southern mouths of the passes leading from the Pamirs to Kashmir, and that these routes are sealed against Russian explorers, as Captain Grombtchevski recently had occasion to experience. This is all the more necessary, as the reports of recent travellers have shown that the difficulties of some of the passes, great as they are, have been much exaggerated. In addition to the explorations of MM. Bonvalot and Duvergne, an English lady and gentleman, Mr. and Mrs. Littledale, crossed the Baroghil Pass a year or two ago, under circumstances that presented no overwhelming difficulty; and it is reported that a horseman can gallop through it from Wakhan to Chitral without drawing bridle. Where such travellers can penetrate, the Cossack is not likely to be impeded; and a vigilant guard upon all the southern exits of the Pamirs will henceforth be the important work of our agent at Gilgit.

But to return to the Pamirs themselves. The reports of extensive annexations having been already made by Russia, amounting almost to the whole of the plateaux between the Altai range and the Hindu Kush, must, we are inclined to think, be a premature alarm. That Russian parties, more or less strong, have been freely crossing the Pamir steppes within the last few years, especially during the past summer,

is incontestable. But that they have planted outposts on either the Great Pamir or the Little Pamir, no trustworthy evidence has been alleged; and this, as we take it, is the only sense in which a Pamir can be said to be annexed. If, as is alleged, Captain Younghusband and Lieutenant Davidson have been excluded by the Russians from the Little Pamir, this would imply a claim of ownership; but we cannot doubt that Russia, when brought to book, will be found prepared with quite another explanation, as she has often previously been under similar circumstances. We know that the Russians have already come into collision with the Chinese on the Alichur and Rang-Kul Pamirs, and that the remonstrances of the Kashgar officials were disregarded. This, however, does not imply much, for M. Bonvalot also paid no attention to the challenge of the Chinese officials on the Rang-kul, who seemed to be in no position to resist his passage, although they prevented him from obtaining any assistance for his journey. The Chinese agent was ordered to stop all travellers who had not a pass from the governor of Kashgar; and he informed M. Bonvalot that a few years before, his predecessor in the office had been punished by banishment along with his whole family for having allowed some Russians to cross the Pamir. This indicates in no unmistakable way the intention of the Chinese to make good their claim to the Pamirs lying towards the side of Kashgaria; and China as well as Britain will have to be consulted before these so-called annexations can be regarded as *un fait accompli*. A statement attributed to Captain Younghusband since his return is to the effect that Russia no longer lays any claim to the Alichur Pamir, which she acknowledges to be Chinese territory.

With regard to the presence of Russia on the Pamirs themselves, she might stay there and welcome, providing that we had sound guarantees that she would keep away from the ranges that lead down from them and out of the passes that open up to them. On the Roof of the World itself her presence is as harmless to others as it is useless to herself. But it is the command of the passes on all sides of the Pamirs that is the object of her present movements; and this is what neither China, Afghanistan, nor Great Britain, who are all equally aggrieved by her present action, will permit her to have. It therefore becomes necessary to compel her to indicate clearly her political interest

in the Pamirs, to fix upon a definite boundary, and to confine herself for the future behind it. A few weeks ago we had from the *Novoe Vremya* an inkling of what form the Russian side of the Pamirs question is to take. The incursions made by the Chinese on the Little Pamir and the valley of the Ak-su, the English assumption of direct rule over Kashmir and advance to Gilgit, and the suppression of the late rebellion in Badakshan by the ameer of Cabul, together with the occupation of the petty states of Shugnan and Roshan in the Little Pamir, are all treated as fresh instances of aggression on the parts of the respective powers, which make it imperative on Russia to determine her exact frontier on the regions in question.

Now, as it so happens, the only encroachment to which any color of fresh aggression can be given is the establishment by England of her garrison at Gilgit—a position which, lying well within the immemorial frontier of Hindustan, does not fall within the scope of Russian criticism. As for China's culpability in encroaching upon the Pamirs, she only maintains a right which was never before denied her—a right exercised by Yakub Beg in the days of his rule in Yarkand, and again entered upon by China on her recovery of the country. As for Abdurahaman's right to conquer the Badakshan rebels and occupy the Pamir abutting upon that state, Russia has herself admitted it in previous years, and can scarcely be permitted now to point to it as an innovating encroachment. But on the important subject of Badakshan we shall have something to say later on. What we have at present to point out is, that the unwritten custom of the Pamirs has been to assign to the surrounding powers the plateaux, valleys, and ranges immediately contiguous to their territories. Of this custom Russia promptly availed herself on her conquest of Khokand, by annexing the Altai ranges and the Khar-gashi Pamir as belonging to that State. She had signified to our ambassador at St. Petersburg her intention of doing this as early as 1865, and no opposition was offered. But this concession involved the rights strictly pertaining to Khokand, and nothing further. The proposal of the upper Oxus at the Russian limit in 1872, however, gave Russia a claim upon the Pamirs in excess of the territory accruing to her from Khokand; and the uncertainty regarding which head of the Oxus was to be understood, left her consider-

able latitude, which she is now abusing by endeavoring to make out a claim for the whole region.

Where so simple and natural a principle of partition already exists, the erection of such an artificial frontier as a watershed must necessarily prove in a tract like the Pamirs, seriously complicates matters. The loose description of the boundary assigned to Russia in 1872, and definitely accepted by her in January of the following year, gives Russia an opportunity of raising a controversy as to which particular branch of the Oxus rising in the Pamirs is to be regarded as the head-waters in the terms of the treaty. We find sufficient difference of opinion upon this point even among the most recent explorers. Bonvalot is evidently disposed to regard the Ak-su-Bartang, the longest of the Pamir rivers, flowing from the Gaz-kul in the Little Pamir, as the true head of the Oxus. The Panjah, which contests this honor with the Ak-su-Bartang, is not quite so long, and has two sources, one in Lake Victoria in the Great Pamir, the other in Kunjut to the east of the Baroghil Pass. The question that will probably have to be discussed is, which of these arms we are to consider as the boundary stipulated in the understanding—if Russia is to be allowed to make an understanding which has been always hitherto inoperative the basis of fresh negotiations; and Russia will not improbably insist that the Kunjut affluent is the one to be recognized. On the other hand, we have the fact that the Panjah River and Lake Victoria have been publicly proclaimed to be Russia's southern boundary for seventeen or eighteen years, and that until quite recently Russia has shown no disposition to question it. But the choice between the Panjah and the Ak-su in the Pamirs is of secondary importance compared with the difficulties which the river frontier gives rise to after it has turned round the Pamir plateaux. The Panjah runs through the states of Wakhan, Shugnan, Roshan, and Darwaz, cutting each of them into two parts, and giving, according to Russia's reading of the agreement, one part to Bokhara—that is, Russia—and the other to Afghanistan. In effect Bokhara never was and Russia never has been able to avail herself of any claim that might be thus established, and which, moreover, Russia herself surrendered in 1875 when she agreed to waive all Bokharian claims to Wakhan and Badakshan, practically as the price of our acquiescence in her conquest of Khiva. In Wakhan, Shugnan, and Roshan the

river boundary has never been taken into account, nor has Bokhara ever been able to exercise any influence in Darwaz. In point of fact the agreement boundary within the confines of these states is an impossible one, and several years ago so high an authority as General Walker of the Indian Surveys declared that it would have to be abandoned "for the lines of water-parting along the hill-ranges which form the natural boundaries of the several states."

It is in this region more than in the high Pamirs that the real delimitation struggle with Russia will have to be carried on. Ever since the time of her first appearance in the khanates, Russia has been keenly alive to the political and strategical advantages which the possession of both Badakshan and Wakhan would afford her. She has made several attempts to raise claims to them on various grounds, and though she has formally renounced all designs upon these territories, and recognized them as Afghan property, she has never ceased intriguing to establish a footing in these countries. We can scarcely be deceived in supposing that to raise the question of the possession of Badakshan and Wakhan, and to have her formal renunciation of them cancelled by a fresh delimitation, is one of the main objects of her demonstrations on the Pamirs; and this supposition serves also to explain an unusual and surprising readiness on her part to join in a new convention for delimiting the frontier in the regions of the upper Oxus.

We shall now briefly consider the position which these States of Badakshan and Wakhan occupy in the international relations of England, Afghanistan, and Russia. Russia at an early period saw that she could build no tenable pretensions to Bokhariot claims of suzerainty over these khanates, and took up another ground. Her great object was to get them recognized as independent States lying outside Afghan authority; and into an agreement to this effect she had almost tricked Lord Granville and the Foreign Office. When Mr. Forsyth went to St. Petersburg in 1869 to negotiate for a neutral zone between England and Russia, the former readily agreed that Afghanistan should be defined as "the territories at that time in the actual possession of Shere Ali." At this time little more than a year had passed since Shere Ali had recovered his kingdom; his authority over the extremities of Afghanistan was as yet scarcely even nominal; and Badakshan in particular, which

was attached to the cause of Abdurrahman, did not recognize his rule. But Lord Mayo was prompt to detect the error into which Lord Granville had been betrayed, and pointed out that the limits of Afghanistan as established by Dost Mohammed must be regarded as identical with those of the territories belonging to Shere Ali Khan. Here the two governments radically differed, the British government contending for the kingdom of Dost Mohammed, the Russian for the territories over which Shere Ali was at the moment actually able to make good his possession. In 1872 Prince Gortchakoff, in a despatch to the Russian ambassador at London, "laid principal stress upon the maintenance of Badakshan and Wakhan as independent States, outside of the frontiers assigned to Shere Ali Khan."

They pressed this point all the more strongly, inasmuch as in the actual state of affairs at that moment there was no conflict between Badakshan and its neighbors. Bokhara laid no claim to that country. The States, moreover, are too weak, and too much absorbed in their internal affairs, to pick quarrels with each other. All, therefore, that remained for England and Russia was to endeavor to maintain this state of peace among the khanates, as well as between Afghanistan and Badakshan. Matters would be entirely changed the moment the Ameer of Cabul extended his authority over Badakshan and Wakhan. He would find himself in immediate contact with Kashgar, Khokand, and Bokhara, from which he had hitherto been separated by those two countries; and thenceforward it would be far more difficult to avoid collisions, arising either from his ambition and the consciousness of his own strength, or from the jealousy of his neighbors.

The question thus remained a subject of controversy, but meanwhile the increasing strength of the ameer had restored his full authority over Balkh and the Oxus States, and both Badakshan and Wakhan were again ruled from Cabul. Russia was preparing herself for her Khivan expedition, and with a generous show of giving up what she had no claim to or hold upon, conceded these States to the ameer. Prince Gortchakoff thus describes the act of renunciation in his memorandum of April, 1875:—

Malgré ces concessions importantes le Gouvernement Anglais ne crut pas pouvoir adhérer à la combinaison proposée par nous. Dans cet état de choses ne voulant pas retarder plus longtemps le règlement de cette question, le Cabinet Impérial, dans sa dépêche du 19 Janvier 1873, consentit à la réunion du Badakchan et du Wakhan au territoire Afghan

et donna ainsi son adhésion pleine et entière à la ligne de démarcation proposée par la dépêche de Lord Granville en date du 17 Octobre 1872.

And betrayed for once into ingenuousness, Prince Gortchakoff immediately adds:—

Sur ces entrefaits l'expédition de Khiva fut décidée.

The only quibble that can be raised over this surrender must be founded upon the mention of "the line of demarcation" proposed in Lord Granville's despatch—the upper source of the Oxus; and upon the uncertain issues connected with this line an excuse will most likely be founded for demanding a reopening of the subject of Badakshan and Wakhan. In both states the course of the Oxus cuts off those portions of territory that slope up towards the Pamirs, and we shall probably have a claim to these advanced on the ancient agreement with Lord Granville, which, as we showed before, has not been observed by Russia in any other regions affected by it, and which was practically rendered obsolete in all other parts by the operations of the joint Afghan Boundary Commission. The claim which Afghanistan possesses through Badakshan and Wakhan, not merely to the territories of these States, but to the Pamirs abutting on them, is as indefeasible as that which Russia possesses to the Altai passes and Khargashi Pamir, arising out of her conquest of Khokand. Our obligation to maintain these as Afghan territory is one from which our duty, or to put it on a lower ground, our self-interest, will not allow us to swerve. We have guaranteed by treaty to maintain the integrity of the ameer's dominions; and we cannot conceive any British government—least of all that of Lord Salisbury—abating an inch of the ameer's just pretensions in that direction. The possibility of Russia being allowed to spread along the Badakshan or Wakhan territory between the Oxus and the Pamirs is a question that we presume Lord Salisbury's Cabinet will scarcely think necessary to submit to discussion.

The whole past history of Badakshan and Wakhan gives no indication of any claims that Bokhara can urge over these khanates. Anciently, Badakshan was ruled by a long line of native princes, boasting a descent from Alexander the Great, down to the middle of the eighteenth century, when it became extinct, and the present dynasty of mirs succeeded. They were ousted by the Usbegs

of Kunduz early in the present century, and these overran the country until 1859, when they were expelled by Dost Mohammed, who made a chief of the old line of mirs ruler under his own supremacy. In 1867 the ameer deposed this ruler for the part he had taken in the civil wars, and appointed another member of the same family mir in his stead. When the present ameer of Cabul divided Turkistan into two governments, Badakshan, with Shugnan, Roshan, and Wakhan, became parts of the eastern province. The old feudal independence was completely broken down, the chiefs reduced to the exercise of such authority as the governor thought could safely be intrusted to them, and, with the exception of the mir of Roshan, all the old governing families are extinct, or reduced to the position of officials of the Cabul government. During the two years that the Ameer Abdurrahman resided in Balkh-Turkistan, in 1888-90, he was able to do much to strengthen his authority over the Oxus khanates; and though quite recently there were disturbances in Badakshan, we take these to be an indication of the irritation with which the drastic rule of the ameer is borne by a population hitherto left very much to do as they pleased. All recent travellers in this region testify to the strict watch which is maintained by the Cabul officials over all passes leading down from the Pamirs into Afghan territory; and there is no more jealously guarded part of the Afghan dominions than the Badakshan and Wakhan states. There is probably no part of Balkh-Turkistan the loss of which would so seriously affect the ameer as that of Badakshan. His wife is a daughter of the old mir family of the khanate, the Badakshanis have always been devoted to the cause of him and his father, and the assistance which he received from them contributed largely to the victories of Shaikabad and Khelat-i-Ghilzye, which placed his father Afzul upon the throne of Cabul. Apart altogether from any sentimental feelings for the country, Abdurrahman's resources would be seriously impaired by the loss of this state. The ruby and lapis-lazuli mines yield a considerable amount of precious stones, which are exported across the Oxus to China and Kashmir; and there are lead, sulphur, and copper deposits which only want to be better worked to return a large revenue.

And now let us glance for a moment at the political and military disadvantages that are obvious from any attempt of Russia to establish herself in the Trans-Oxus

portions of Badakshan, Wakhan, Shugnan, Roshan, and Darwaz, which we take to be the object of her present manœuvres, and to take up positions in the passes leading from the Pamir through the Hindu Kush range. From these regions she can make her way to Cabul by Bamian with much less difficulty than she could advance from Herat; and in any invasion of Afghanistan she could and undoubtedly would employ both routes. But even if she were to take up her position in these regions as a peaceable neighbor pledged to confine herself by the boundary of the upper Oxus, this would mean an extension of the ameer's military frontier, which the resources of Afghanistan are far from being able to afford. Moreover, Russia by such an advance would be voluntarily thrusting herself among turbulent and fanatic tribes, who are incapable of offering her any molestation at present, but who, if she intrude upon their neighborhood, will soon give her ample pretext for punishing them, and for annexing their territory. In the valleys between the Hindu Kush, Peshawur, Attock, and Kashmir, are located some of the most lawless and savage clans that civilization has still left untouched in the East, who are a constant source of trouble to both the British and the Afghan governments, and who, by the introduction of a third power into this neighborhood, would be rendered altogether unmanageable. But we need not dwell upon these facts, for we may make perfectly certain that the government of India will take due care to assert its rights in all regions south of the Hindu Kush, should Russia seek, as we scarcely think she will have the temerity to do, to encroach upon them.

Any danger that might threaten by way of Chitral and Gilgit has, we think, been anticipated by the step which the Indian government has taken in sending Colonel Durand to Gilgit and strengthening the military force at his disposal. The significance of this step will not be lost on Russia. But to complete our security we must keep Russia out of the Afghan Pamirs and away from the passes. No doubt the nature of the country which Russia would have to traverse is in itself a greater security than an armed frontier could afford; but we must not build our confidence solely upon mountain-barriers. Time, perseverance, and Cossacks have already done wonders in overcoming such obstacles in central Asia; and all these are resources which Russia applies ungrudgingly to her aims. Though we need

not apprehend an attack in chief on India in this quarter, yet if Russia is allowed to establish herself south of the Pamirs, a diversion from that direction when we are least able to meet it is a possibility against which we have to prepare ourselves. The late Sir Charles MacGregor, in his "confidential" study of the defence of India, pictured the Indian army entangled in a winter campaign in Afghanistan, with a Russian column from Marghilan, which had advanced *via* Kolab on Chitral, threatening an advance on Peshawur; and a Pamir column, advancing by the Terek Dawan Pass, keeping up a constant irritation on the Kashmir frontier. In such a difficulty, Sir Charles foresaw India being compelled to acquiesce in "a new Russian frontier, drawn from the crest of the Terek Dawan Pass, south by the watershed of the Pamir to the Hindu Kush, then by the crest of that range to the Koh-i-Baba, and then to include the whole of the country of the Hazaras, and the province of Herat to the Farah-Rud." "This new frontier," Sir Charles adds, "would be all that Russia need aim at in the first campaign. Then she could afford to wait until a favorable opportunity arose for the real invasion of India."* The present attempt of Russia to obtain the eastern portion of this ideal frontier by pacific means justifies Sir Charles MacGregor's prescience; it will be the duty of her Majesty's government to put it out of Russia's power to realize his prediction in its fullest sense.

It must have struck those who have had experience of Russia's skill in diplomatic fencing, that at the present juncture she is showing, to all appearances, a remarkable, even suspicious, readiness to enter into negotiations for a rectification of the upper Oxus frontier. So different is her promptitude from the delays and obstructions which she has always placed in the way of negotiations on previous occasions, that we cannot be wrong in concluding that she has some fresh end to gain. In fact, all these otherwise aimless expeditions about the Pamirs during the last few years seem to us designed to draw England into a fresh negotiation in which Russia hopes to secure at least the Ak-su-Bartang line of frontier, if not the range of the Hindu Kush. Any satisfaction we may feel at the prospect of a settlement must be considerably dashed by the uncertainty of the position Russia will take

up. There is no doubt that the agreement of 1872-73, construed in the widest sense which Russia will assuredly attach to it, is an immediate disadvantage to ourselves. But we are strengthened by the facts that that agreement was never regarded by Russia herself as operative in any other region of the frontier; that the Afghan frontier negotiations effaced its obligations quite as much upon the side of England as upon that of Russia; that Russia's recognition of our obligation to maintain intact the ameer's dominions prevents her from drawing a boundary line within what is actually Afghan territory; and that Russia's claim to the Pamirs does not extend beyond those immediately abutting on her own territory. We may feel every confidence that all these points in our favor will be fully urged on our side, and that Lord Salisbury's government will be able to retrieve the unsatisfactory and uncertain arrangement handed over to it by the late ministry.

On this occasion a third party will be added to the negotiations, on whose support England may calculate with some confidence. China has not less to fear from the intrigues of Russian restlessness and ambition than our Indian Empire has. She has a much longer and more exposed frontier to defend, with the certainty that Russian movements on one part of it will be accompanied by danger all along the line. No power has so much at stake as China in the new Franco-Russian alliance; for, whether in the north or in the south, mutual action on the part of the French and Russians would place China in a serious dilemma. China is also well aware that not merely Kashgaria but Tibet lies well within the sphere of Russian ambition, and that the latter is simply waiting for some serious internal commotion in China or some difficulty with the treaty powers to make herself mistress of these countries. The possession of the passes leading into Yarkand-Kashgar and the Pamirs abutting thereon, is an advantage to the Chinese hold on these countries which the government at Peking is not likely to overlook; and it will also readily perceive the necessity of joining Great Britain in warding off Russia's approach in the direction of the Baroghil Pass or the Karakorum. Recent Russian explorations suggest that ideas of thrusting herself along the northern Himalaya slopes between India and Tibet have not been overlooked, whether they may have been found practicable or the reverse. On China, however, we must chiefly rely on

* The Life and Opinions of Major-General Sir Charles MacGregor, vol. ii, p. 346. William Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London.

checking her advance in that quarter. This is the first time that China and Great Britain have been drawn together to resist the most dangerous antagonist of both, and it may be hoped that the result will eventuate in a new element of security to both powers.

We do not indulge in prophecy, but it needs no prescience to foresee that, should anything occur to impair the Chinese power of resistance in central Asia, RUSSIA WILL TURN THE NORTH-EASTERN CORNER OF OUR INDIAN EMPIRE before the next century is out of its teens. Such a prospect — such a possibility even — as this involves for both China and Great Britain, cannot fail to make them both realize the serious responsibility that rests upon them to circumscribe, with all resolution, Russia's aggressive designs at a very vital point in the positions of the two empires.

From Temple Bar.

"DESDEMONY."

PART I.

THE great Jezebel, the Phœnician princess of high degree, was vaguely referred to as an ancestress by the arrogant young person who presided over "Kewney's Furniture Stores," a second-hand dealer's shop in the district known as Blossom Grove.

The why or the wherefore of such an unsavory region being designated Blossom Grove was far to seek. Had anything fresh or sweet-smelling ever come to perfection there? Could at any time the smallest bud of beauty have expanded in this vile atmosphere, reeking of rottenness and a degraded humanity? Nay, surely in this network of sinful slums the strongest human soul could never have struggled into any full or beautiful life. Any accidental germs of virtue were promptly trodden down in this festering bed of corruption, where brute passions rioted and a low cunning took the place of morality.

The lady who called herself Jezebel lived, however, on the borders of this grove of iniquity, and took no count of her neighbors except as customers. She affected an air of superior culture if casually questioned regarding her own antecedents.

"Ain't I told yer that her as was in the Bible — the book them Salvationists reads and 'ollers out of — she was reckoned a

real beauty, and fell out of winder? Well, she belonged of my fam'ly some time back; 'tain't any great matter when, but I've got her marriage lines sure as I'm called Jezebel too." The "lines" thus referred to were truly a certificate of marriage of some other Jezebel some fifty years before. And to this document the young person so proudly asserting her descent had faithfully clung as an authentic token of legitimate parentage. Centuries were of small account to her uncultured mind, and probably no argument would have convinced her that "marriage lines" were not in vogue at an ante-Christian period.

The audience thus addressed by Madam Jezebel, wholly indifferent to the matter of certificates, and having no understanding of hereditary claims to distinction, suffered the lady's emphatic assertion to rest unchallenged. This not being a well-read section of the community, Jezebel might confound the ignorant as she listed.

Mrs. Bob Kewney, otherwise Jezebel, was at this epoch the beauty of Ladd's Lane as well as the possessor of the readiest wit of any lady in Blossom Grove. In a coarse and showy way she was handsome, setting off her charms by smart raiment and much glitter of beads and pinchbeck jewelry, when such gauds were attainable. Her Hebrew descent was apparent in her features, leaving out of the question the Phœnician ancestress. Likewise Jezebel's superior mental qualities and tenacity of purpose helped to prove the fact that she was of Jewish origin. I cannot say that this youthful matron had any distinct form of creed or spiritual desire. Like all those about her she held broadly Catholic views, making no profession of faith, nor yet demonstrating any sectarian feeling in favor of church, chapel, or synagogue. Religions and creeds were to her all alike, though she betrayed a certain contempt of such, to her thinking, narrow-minded people as priests and parsons who denounced shady practices and cast an eye of disapproval on dishonest dealers. In consequence of this limited perception of advantage on their part she could not be expected to feel much sympathy with their unripe theories of life.

When Jezebel first startled Blossom Grove with her appearance as Bob Kewney's bride, the discerning inhabitants pronounced the dealer to be a fool of the first magnitude, asseverating this conviction with customary pious or impious appeals to superior jurisdictions. For over

thirty years he had carried on his business at the corner shop without feminine assistance, but now here was an alien, from whence none could say, suddenly introduced to preside over decayed furniture and musty carpets. To the matrons there was, however, soon a gentle satisfaction derived from Bob Kewney's subjugation. It became apparent that the intrepid hero of many a street brawl was himself at last subject to an arbitrary sway. The showy young person with greasy black curls and long gold earrings was distinctly domineering. Her elderly husband cringed and muttered in her presence. Gone were the loud and blatant speeches with the rough and ready handling of any argumentative customer. A more diplomatic rule, with the arts of persuasion dominant, had superseded the policy of the past.

Certainly Mr. Kewney's submissive attitude was utterly at variance with any foregone experience of husbands in the Lane, where masculine boots administered sound reproof, or the poker was called into requisition to vanquish the spirit of any over-bold partner.

Whether by love or fear, it seemed that the stalwart young Jezebel ruled her spouse to his own good, trampling upon all such habits as she deemed disadvantageous with a very decided heel.

Not only was Mr. Kewney constrained from spending Saturday evening, or indeed any other evening, at the Hoop and Toy with the convivial associates of early days, but it was likewise observed that he had now a limited control of ready money. In former days he could be safely relied on to lend any friend in need small sums from half a crown to ten shillings. Now it was observed that "Bob, he's growed precious stingy."

On Sundays this doughty hero must perforce rise up early to wash and shave himself, giving due care to hair-oil and a clean shirt, instead of spending the best part of the day in bed. A weekly rite of this nature had perchance a far-off likeness to a religious ceremonial.

If so be the Sunday was fine, Mrs. Kewney took her partner abroad for an airing—to Hampstead or Regent's Park, according to the length of the days.

On such occasions the gorgeous splendor of her toilet would strike the passers-by with amazement; and the wondering stares of the passengers reflected a modest glory on the man who supported his "missus" on his arm. Herein was no little compensation for the pains of a starched collar and the constriction of coat-sleeves.

Only Jezebel's silk gown and gold neck-chains made her no friends in Ladd's Lane. It is possible that the superior gentility of a hat much decorated with ostrich feathers further aggravated the curious susceptibilities of the daughters of Eve. They opined that the new-comer's extravagance "would be the ruin of that poor Bob, it would;" yet as time went on it seemed rather the other way, and Jezebel's black curls and sharp wits attracted many new customers to the shop. Bob Kewney had certainly never carried on so brisk a business in his bachelor days.

It was clear to all purchasers that Jezebel knew how to drive a bargain, though she endeavored to disguise her own firmness of purpose by an exuberant flow of banter. By much cajolery she softened the edges of rapacity, and a customer was often persuaded to believe that she was doing him a personal kindness in suffering him to become the possessor of any desired article. If quite unable to auctioneer the beauty or utility of some worthless thing under discussion, Jezebel would lend a halo of romance to its time-worn aspect, rarely failing to convince and ensnare her customer by her sentimental coloring.

"Now you may declare as that sofa have seen better days. I shouldn't wonder neither if it belonged of a dook once. Them things is like old horses, they gets a trick of coming down in life. Think of all the little lords and ladies as have sat on it, with white lace frocks and blue sashes a playing with their ma's and pa's coronets."

Here Jezebel paused and eyed the purchaser sideways to see if the coronets were an effective shot.

Apparently these were unknown baubles to Jeremiah Smith, who feebly intimated that there was some infirmity about the limbs of the couch.

"Lame of one leg, you say! Then may be it have got pairylized, which is a aristocratic complaint." Then Jezebel softly dusted the sofa with her apron, remarking with gentle blandishment:—

"Look you here, Jeremiah, it's mahogany and real leather, leastways what's left of it. 'Tain't none of your deal rubbish covered with prickly horsehair or common 'merican cloth."

"But there don't seem no springs in it," said the man, testing it with a horny, work-soiled hand. Jezebel laughed derisively and tossed her long earrings about.

"You can't expect the insides of things to go on working forever. Bless yer, it's only the extry-best quality insides that

lasts longer than the outsides. Look at your sick wife whose heart you've broke of. She ain't got much spring left in her, I know. You say as fifteen bob is too much. Can't spare it, can't you, and you earning thirty-five shillings a week? You are a nice one to begrudge a sofa to that poor suffering creature who has worked of herself to a shadder all along of your unsteady ways. Go along!"

Then the shame-faced costermonger declared that ten shillings was all he possessed.

"Well, we won't make no words about the five bob. Let 'em stand over. When you've sold your barrer quite clean I'll come and fetch 'em."

And so Mr. Jeremiah Smith was booked the purchaser of the worthless sofa with decrepit legs, and Jezebel, clutching his last half-sovereign tightly, was less profusely sympathetic regarding the sick wife.

PART II.

Two years passed by without any extraordinary revolution of sin and dirt in Blossom Grove. Sanitary inspectors came and smelt and departed. Policemen paraded systematically and got maimed and killed occasionally. Lady visitors and street missionaries sought out converts, and made them, frequently to their own satisfaction. But too often the last stage of the converted man or woman was worse than the first, and the devout and pious workers had but plastered hidden sores, and whitened a sepulchre of rottenness. Political philanthropists did now and again call attention to the state of Blossom Grove, but it not being a desirable site for public buildings, the majority turned a listless gaze on its degradation. For after all there is little benevolence not actuated by self-interest. The voice of the regenerator cries in the wilderness where the landlord foresees no ultimate benefit to himself.

Ladd's Lane was happily on the outskirts of this festering mass of living creatures where rookeries and dens abounded. At the end of this street, which abutted on a main thoroughfare, there flowed a wholesome stream of fairly sound humanity. And this partial glimpse of a purer life beyond the precincts of the Grove was not without its influence on Jezebel.

She began to observe other people's babies from her window, before the arrival of her own, and it became apparent to her that outside Blossom Grove all children

were not skinny, weird atoms of humanity. It seemed to her that a baby was even a pretty and engaging creature when not carried regularly to a gin palace or suffered to wallow in a gutter.

And so, at a very early stage of its existence, Jezebel's baby girl was a surprising revelation of infancy to the Lane. The ladies of the Lane, it must be understood, passed a good deal of their time at street corners, looking on at, or criticising other people's affairs.

The Kewney baby was no shrunken piece of humanity, bloodless and sickly, with the preternaturally old face all were accustomed to. It did not, like the other children here, give the lie to happier evolutionary theories, and point to retrogressive probabilities.

The little Desdemona, which high-sounding name had taken Mrs. Jezebel's fancy after a visit to the play, was as lovely as any divine infant dreamt of by poet or painter. She might have dropped from the clouds a perfect cherub in her early days. Bob Kewney himself had sandy hair of a dull shade, but nature's beneficent touch had burnished the child's curly locks to purest gold. Jezebel had large, bright eyes, dark and bold, but the baby's soft orbs were of a rich and velvety brown, gentle and appealing as a fawn's.

The almighty mother had dowered this product of the slums with a rare beauty of limb and feature, which might even have been highly prized in a patrician home. It seems that now and again, as if in defiance of all law and order, nature can and does create such exquisite forms to puzzle the thinker, and controvert every theory of what ought to be. It was no small matter to marvel at, that a baby should thrive and grow more lovely day by day in the impure surroundings of the Grove. But tribute must duly be paid to Jezebel's perceptions. The young mother passed by the advice and example of experienced matrons who had reared large families of rickety offspring. The moral of narrow-chested, bandy-legged sons, and pale-faced, heavy-eyed daughters did not adorn the tale of their maternity. Regardless of the offence given to these worthy dames, she sought the advice of an eccentric young doctor who had elected to practise amongst the poor of this district.

The principles he set forth were in fact a doctrine of regeneration to these wretched people, could they only have been made to understand that attention to

their bodies was one of the things that belonged to their peace. That cleanliness comes next to godliness is an absurdity to preach to such heathen. Tell them rather that cleanliness is the forerunner of all health and happiness and comfort.

The daring young practitioner, having explained to Jezebel certain unheard-of laws of hygiene, was surprised to see them accepted by this ordinarily self-reliant young woman. The small Desdemona was washed and dressed daily — an altogether supererogatory rite of purification in the eyes of Ladd's Lane. The child was also allotted an airy upper chamber in the tenement occupied by the Kewneys and their possessions. From this apartment all the derelict lumber was cleared, and here, out of sight and sound of the noisy street, the little maid was reared. On fine days a large breadth of blue sky might be seen, and wandering winds, not tainted by the impurity below, travelled through the open window and ruffled the baby's silken curls.

"She 'aves a quart of milk prime quality every day for that there child, as I'm a living woman. Fippence a day! — why I do declare it's flying in the face of fortune," said one much disgusted lady who stood at the street corner with her hands on her hips watching the delivery of the milkman's cart — an unheard-of delivery in these parts. This beetle-browed virago and her companion were, be it observed, outside the gates of their terrestrial paradise, the Hoop and Toy; moreover, it was a hot and thirsty day, and they had not a penny in their pockets.

Little Desdemona was taken out daily in a perambulator, but not through Blossom Grove. In her infancy no one ever caught a glimpse of the child abroad in one of those unsavory streets. Happy babe to live out of ken of all the foul things about her home, high above cursing and swearing, up near the clouds and stars, where in her cradle she might coo to the sparrows, and gain no deeper knowledge of wickedness than what was shown in the predatory ways of cats chasing the birds over the tiles.

When Desdemona was about three years old it was no longer considered safe to leave her to play alone in the far-off attic, and so she began to follow her mother down-stairs. Then all at once Ladd's Lane was roused to indignation on perceiving the idolatry lavished upon their child by Bob Kewney and his wife.

"It is a sin and a shame to waste of her time a-combing of Desdemony's 'air every

day," remarked one unkempt virgin, whose own coarse locks were skewered together with a small steel fork.

"Mrs. Kewney she do cocker the child up quite shameful. Nought ain't good enough for her" — here the mother of ten shook her latest offspring vehemently.

"Mine jest lives on what they can pick up, and no one can't say I 'aven't had experience of babies." Here the lady looked round defiantly to see if any one dared to refute her proud assertion of maternity.

"And for sure, Mrs. Spink, we ail knows as you've buried six," rejoined the quavering voice of an old inhabitant.

"Six of 'em girls and boys, and all of 'em insured. Joe and me didn't do badly." Again the puny, bleary-eyed baby was forcibly reminded to sit up. Its huge head and shrunken body seemed to give promise of another insurance to be paid shortly.

"Anyway, Mrs. Kewney, she won't insure of Desdemony, and she makes a puddin' every day, and the little kid wears white socks and red shoes. Bless yer, they'll want a nuss girl next." This sally was received with much derisive laughter, which even reached Jezebel's ears in the upper chamber. The scandal-mongers were gathered on the pavement opposite her dwelling, and discussed their neighbor's extravagance and foolish pride with no less charity and envy than is manifested by ladies of higher degree who meet together for social purposes and strew comments and sow suspicion by the way-side, regarding their dearest friend's actions and expenditure.

As time went on, Bob Kewney could less and less overcome his astonishment at being the father of such an infant prodigy.

"Desdemony, she is a rale beauty. She don't take arter her dad anyway — not she — she know'd better. I don't rightly think she's like her mother, neither." And he watched the fairy-like creature who played about his knees, showing off her little tricks and airs with all the grace and prettiness as of a well-born child. To say that this father idolized his little daughter would but faintly describe the passionate feeling of worship which he felt. In his sordid life he had known nothing of purity or beauty, and the development of this exquisite flower of humanity at his hearthstone seemed to wake to life an unknown sentiment of reverence. The divine breath of love, with its life-giving power, created in his mind a dim consciousness that in life — ay, perhaps

beyond it — there were better things than he had ever known. I do not dare to say that such thoughts took any clear or definite form in his mind, for such minds hardly formulate thought; but a shadowy shame visited him if a foul oath escaped him in the child's presence, and day by day he stood further aloof from his old comrades.

In one direction little Desdemona followed her mother at a very early age. Any rags of lace or ribbon, any bright artificial flowers or faded feathers were sufficient to make her playtime happy. Her love for finery or pretty colors seemed inherent, yet redeemed in her case by a sort of picturesque adjustment of decoration which heightened her loveliness — or perhaps it was her loveliness which glowed more brightly in contrast to its tawdry framing.

One of the child's favorite haunts was the recess behind the shop, where Bob doctored the weakly articles of furniture.

It was a large space, with uneven flooring and many angles and corners for hiding. It was full of tools, blocks of wood, glue-pots, stuffing for seats, bits of chintz and old leather, and had a carpenter's bench in one corner. It was dirty and untidy always, but the picturesque confusion was attractive to a child. To little Desdemona's active imagination it was a cave of magic, where she saw daily transformations. And here also was a long cracked mirror, picked up for a trifle at some sale, which was kept specially for the little one's amusement. Before this glass she would pirouette and dance, bow and gesticulate with most wonderful gravity, arrayed in the finery she loved. By turns she called herself a queen, an angel, or a lady. Her father, with his short black pipe in his mouth and a dirty cap pushed back, would stare in amazement at such antics. His own imaginative faculties were limited, and the boundless fancies of his child were a never-ending puzzle.

Desdemona had no playmates. The precocious cunning brats of the slums found no comrade in the dainty little maid who wore a clean pinafore and white socks. Thus, in a measure, she escaped the contamination of coarse minds, and though the sentiments of her parents could scarcely be called refined, yet a veil of decency disguised their natural manners and speech in the child's presence. Desdemona herself as she grew older seemed to deserve the opprobrium hurled at her by the Lane. She was verily "a little

lady" compared to the rest. And so the child budded and blossomed to a fair girlhood.

PART III.

WHEN Desdemona was about seventeen Jezebel became watchful. For some months past it became evident that young men sought an entrance to the shop on most trivial pretexts. Jezebel gathered that the intention of such purchasers of trifles was chiefly to gaze at the girl who sat with her sewing beside her, or flitted in and out of the workshop on household thoughts intent. Mrs. Kewney had in the course of years put on a considerable amount of flesh, and had supplemented nature's failing hand with an exemplary constancy to her original coloring. The massive erection of black plaits, and the marvellously bright complexion, were palpably artificial claims to notice. The effect of these borrowed charms was but to set the fair flower of Desdemona's beauty to greater advantage. Her delicate features and soft brown eyes made her appear like some rare exotic sheltering beneath the care of a gorgeous peony.

But the girl herself, as she tranquilly read or worked at her mother's side, was unconscious of the admiration she excited, and the little gifts from time to time bestowed upon her by young men, and the valentines and Christmas cards which came anonymously in shoals only awakened a childlike astonishment because people were all at once so kind. Desdemona had really no thought of lovers — the result of her exclusion from companionship. That the better-class young men of the district were willing "to go walking with her" would have conveyed small meaning to her. Yet already the son of the prosperous proprietor of the Hoop and Toy had resolved that Desdemona was worthy of courtship. He had been a steward on an ocean steamer, and was newly returned from his long travels, and the delicate, flower-like charms of his young neighbor had riveted his attention. Abel Perkins, having visited many lands and seen many women of varying color and feature, held himself no mean critic of feminine beauty. Yet beyond the rejoinder of a shy yes or no from Desdemona, he had not received any flattering return to his advances. He came and looked hard at her, and went away, without any apparent reason to her as yet.

"Whatever is that young Perkins about?" said Jezebel to her husband one night, out of the girl's hearing. "If he

hasn't been and bought of a frying-pan and a boot-jack, a box of tools and a 'merican clock. It looks like as if he were goin' to set up housekeepin'." Then Bob Kewney took his pipe from his lips.

"It's our Desdemony."

"She don't speak to him," said Jezebel tartly, "and them Perkinses hold themselves very high."

"There's a deal of courting done without speakin'. He watches our girl go in and out from the other side of the road."

"Well, I never!" said Jezebel, reflecting on the grandeur of such an alliance. "Who'd hev thought it. Well, he's an ugly chap anyway to keep company with our Desdemony."

With this qualifying praise of the advantageous suitor, Jezebel went back to her seat in the shop reflecting on the cut and color of a new gown for Desdemony. For she was quite as ready to set her daughter to advantage in the marriage market as any mother of higher degree.

On the same evening Abel Perkins again appeared in the shop. He carried a string of South Sea shells in his hand—those pretty shells that seem to have absorbed all the iridescent loveliness of soft-rolling Pacific waves.

"My! what lovely beads," said Mrs. Kewney, stooping to handle the string. Desdemona lifted her eyes from her book and glanced over the back of her mother's head. Then Abel quickly passed them across to her.

"Why, they're shells, mother," she said in quick surprise as she touched them. Here was the text for Abel's speech. The finding of those shells and the yet stranger wonders of the deep were themes to gain Desdemona's attention. His own perils by sea and land were thrown in skilfully. And she, the gentle maiden, all ignorant of such traveller's tales, listened breathless, with her beautiful, tender eyes dilating at the marvels of such strange countries. And when at last the tale was ended, and the man offered the pretty shells for her acceptance, Desdemona threw them round her slender neck and blushed a little to find the man so earnestly regarding her. What did it mean?

Presently another young man— not by any means prepossessing—entered the shop. He was at once greeted by Jezebel. "So you've come back from your holiday, Harry Spink?"

"Ay, missis, and none too soon. A pretty mess the old one has made of the shop. Why, he's been givin' away of snuff and baccy by the pound to his pals."

This ill-looking lout, who kept a small tobacco-shop in Ladd's Lane, had also of late years worked as an assistant in the shop at repairs. By right of such association, young Spink had assumed a brotherly position towards Desdemona. He was one of the sickly brood aforementioned who had been insured by the foresight of his parents. He had, however, in spite of a large head and withered body, declined to earn his burial fee, and had grown to maturity to add one more to the corrupt race of Blossom Grove. A sly cunning distinguished him above his fellows, and Jezebel had regarded him as no unsuitable partner for her daughter till the publican's son from abroad appeared on the scene.

The two young men at this first encounter glanced sideways at each other with the air of sulky beasts; almost an onlooker might fancy a premonitory growl in the air. It was with a certain tone of aggression that Spink addressed the girl.

"Ain't you got a word to throw to me to-night, Desdemony?"

Desdemona started. She was suddenly recalled to the present.

"I'd forgot as you'd been away," she said quietly. Her hand still played with the string of shells wound round her neck. A gas-lamp set in a draught flared noisily above her head, lighting up the abundant golden plaits and the new necklace at the same time. Her thoughts were far away where palm-trees grew and breezes, redolent of spicy trees, blew over the heads of dusky children splashing on that shore where rainbow-colored waves fell with a soft cadence. Had not the stranger with his own rough imagery told her of these things?

Spink leered in a hideous way at the new necklace, and hated the man who had come poaching on his ground. He cursed him beneath his breath in terms not measured nor mannerly. Likewise, Abel Perkins resented the intrusion of the guest who appeared a familiar friend of the family he was going to honor.

However, in a day or two, Bob Kewney made it manifest to his subordinate that the suit of the publican's son was not to be opposed, and Spink slunk in and out to his work in silence, only glaring ferociously out of his narrow eyes if Abel was anywhere in view.

And so day followed day for a few weeks, and Desdemona became aware that life held a new pleasure for her. She wore her best frocks and plaited her hair more elaborately because Mr. Perkins had

fallen into the habit of dropping in of an evening. And though the man never "walked out" with Kewney's pretty daughter, according to the customary etiquette of courtship in Ladd's Lane, yet he came daily and sat at her feet, drinking in her sweet looks as he chatted. And Abel Perkins possessed a great fund of anecdote, with a capacity for amplifying details which would have done no discredit to an Oriental imagination. The romances of real life were set before Desdemona in most glowing colors, and her lovely face would radiate light and astonishment and sympathy to a marvellous degree. It was a prolonged courtship for people of that class, but the man knew himself the master from the first. Desdemona had no eyes or ears for any other since he had first bewitched her with his wonderful tales. His was the magician's touch which had aroused her delicate fancy. His representations of life in other countries had stretched an imagination that had lived a cramped and starved life. The world was not all London and its ugly surroundings. There were other manners, other customs, other people beyond the limits she knew, and Desdemona longed to see them. Oh, to sail over the waters so blue beneath cloudless skies, to watch the storm arise on the sea and the flaming sun sink to rest in an ocean of liquid gold! To look upon those glorious Eastern temples framed in groves of lofty palms, to touch with her hands the stones of those mighty pyramids, so old and grey, to climb snow-clad mountains, to sail over broad seas, to watch volcanoes light up their fires, to shudder before the icebergs, and to see the whales at play! Some such dreams as these visited the poor, ignorant child, as the man opened the door to fancy and bade her look.

It led to the desired end. For at last a day came whereon Abel Perkins claimed his bride, and Desdemona submitted to be won. Would he take her away with him wherever he went? she asked. And he, smiling, half consented. Who could resist so sweet a suppliant? Alas! poor maid, you know but one side of your lover's character as yet—the more manly and favorable side, too. That Abel Perkins was suspicious, uncertain-tempered, an implacable foe, and jealous to the highest degree, was hidden from you. You only felt that he was tender and considerate to you, that he had passed through many dangers as a brave man should, and that he had set himself to love you. Yet, even while submitting to his first pas-

sionate caress, a shudder passed through Desdemona. Her face was turned to the workshop over his shoulder, and the cruel, vindictive eyes of Spink looked through the aperture of the door.

PART IV.

DESDEMONA was now a bride of three months' standing—a bride of seventeen presiding over the fortunes of the Hoop and Toy. Circumstances had altered strangely, for Perkins the publican was dead suddenly of apoplexy, and Perkins the son reigned in his stead. Gone were all thoughts of travel, faded away like a gorgeous dream were Desdemona's bright hopes of spending her life in fairer places than Blossom Grove. The tale of her life would never tell itself in any beautiful or wonderful way. To live and die here, poor child, that was all.

But Desdemona was dutiful and obedient, she loved Abel and he was her husband. Perhaps some day when he was less busy he would take her far away into the country, beyond the sight of houses and streets, where there were green fields and babbling streams; or better still, if he would carry her to the seashore, where she might watch the same waves which visited remoter lands.

But even at this early stage of their life together, Desdemona began to observe a singular reluctance on the part of her husband to allow her to be seen in any public places. She might have pretty clothes and trinkets as she wished, she might eat and drink of the best, but he would not permit her to go here and there—or at least anywhere, it seemed. She might not appear behind the bar to assist the girl who officiated with the taps, and she would be reprimanded like a naughty child if she paused to bid good-day to any former male acquaintance. They were very grim jests to Desdemona, these frequent reprimands. Jezebel had occasionally taken her young daughter to the gallery of a play-house, and on Sundays to the Park, but these were now unauthorized pleasures if Abel could not join them as protector. Even the Saturday night marketings in the big thoroughfares, when Jezebel carried a large basket and wore a surprising hat and feathers, were not allowed.

"I married you, Desdemony, to please myself, and not for other folks to gape at," Abel would say, as he caressed his wife with that same passionate vehemence as had frightened her in early days of courtship.

"But there ain't no harm in lookin' nice and other folks seein' of me," said Desdemona, one evening, wearying of what was little short of imprisonment. "Do, Abel, let me go to the theayter with mother to-night. I'll put on my oldest gown."

Abel scowled and bit his nails in silence, while the soft voice pleaded:—

"I can't help it if folks look at me, and it don't really make much matter, because when I looks at myself in the glass I know—I see"—here she blushed and stammered.

"You see you are so damned pretty," interposed the man roughly. "Well, so do I, and you shan't go where I can't go." He caught her round the waist and swore a big oath that she should never see admiration in other men's eyes while he lived to prevent it.

As the months went by, this mad, unreasoning jealousy of Desdemona's husband seemed to master him more completely. He was beside himself with rage if she went out alone for a few seconds on a household errand. He would run into the parlor half-a-dozen times a day on some trivial pretext, to satisfy himself she was sitting there solitary. By degrees there came a frightened look to Desdemona's eyes, a timid, deprecating manner of speech to her lips. And yet, in spite of this tyranny, she loved her husband. Her submissive, guileless spirit planned no rebellion or defiance.

It was some time before Jezebel gained any knowledge of the state of affairs between the husband and wife. But she, at any rate, animadverted loudly on her son-in-law's attitude when she made discovery of Desdemona's fears.

"I've heard of them Turks which keeps their women folks only for themselves to look at, and bless me if he don't try on the same game. My Desdemony shan't be shut up that way if I can help it."

To say that Spink the journeyman was delighted with the tale of jealousy and tyranny carried to his ears, would but faintly describe his satisfaction. He hugged the notion of Abel's weakness with a horrible joy, seeing herein the tool to smite Desdemona and her parents. For his low cunning had never ceased to plot revenge for the slight put upon him by the girl's preference. In the Lane he had been the butt of much coarse witticism, and he was not likely to forget his humiliation.

Months went by without any apparent amendment in Abel's conduct, but though

sweet Desdemona's step grew heavier and more sedate, by degrees the narrow horizon of her new life stretched itself out. Wider hopes came into view. Life held possibilities of joy for her. In the distant winter time there would be a cradle to rock, and baby fingers might drive Abel's dark moods away, and crush her own feelings of dissatisfaction. So Desdemona grew less sad, as she practised the singing of lullabies over the making of dainty garments.

Spink had laid his plans with some reflection, and one night took occasion, with fiendish malignity, to sow the seeds of suspicion. But even he hardly realized on what a fertile soil he scattered them. The "trifle light as air" rested in Abel Perkins's mind and took strong root there.

"I seed your missis a-talkin' to the young doctor at the end of the street to-day," he remarked casually.

Abel answered nothing, but went on smoking. Spink wondered if he had missed his mark. He laughed diabolically.

"He's a good-looking cove, that new doctor! All the wimmen in the Lane goes to his dispensary now."

Still the same silence on Abel's part.

"I reckon if I'd a pretty partner alongside me, I'd not be willin' to let her go palaverin' with young doctor chaps."

Abel Perkins made no rejoinder, but drained his glass to the dregs.

"It's about time to turn folks out," he said, glancing at the clock, the hands of which pointed nearly to twelve. Then Spink rose to go, shaking the ashes out of his pipe with a crestfallen look.

But an hour later he might have been better satisfied. Then he would have seen Abel Perkins creep up the staircase with a stealthy step and a strange look of rage upon his face. Outside in the street there went on the usual hideous noises of the low surroundings—women shouting, babies crying, men swearing; but within the precincts of the Hoop and Toy all was still. The house was shut up, and the potmen were snoring in the cellar they occupied; the maid-of-all-work and the barmaid had climbed to their attic, and even the cat had curled herself up for an undisturbed nap amidst empty glasses and sheaves of pipe-stems.

With his hand shading his candle and a silent footfall, Abel opened the door of the bed-chamber he occupied on the second floor. The room was neat and clean, and gave evidence of a woman's care and taste. Desdemona's pink cotton gown,

ready for the morning, was placed on a chair. The string of shells Abel had given her, hung festooned over the looking-glass.

All was still; Desdemona fast asleep. With a look of mingled fear and rage the husband drew near to the bed, and watched her slow-drawn breaths. How lovely she was — how peacefully she slept! One hand pillowed her small face, and the long lashes swept over her pale cheek. Her golden hair, unbound, lay in soft confusion upon the pillow. The man's fiery pulses stilled as he watched her lying there, unconscious of his angry gaze, so calm, so innocent in looks.

He loved her, with a strange, wild passion which gave more pain than pleasure. His first admiring sentiment had deepened to an overmastering love, and now the thought that she might glance with friendly looks at any other man was torture to him. He sat down at the foot of the bed with his head upon the foot-rail, and stared moodily at her. He drew long, heavy sighs from time to time. She stirred in her sleep and turned, stretching out a hand — the little hand with the wedding-ring upon it.

Again the devils stirred up Abel's wrath. He strode about the room and his eye fell upon the shells. He caught them from their resting-place and kissed them. Had they not been wound about her soft throat that very evening. The soft, white throat, how easy to press the life out of it! He started as the thought took shape, and twisted the string of shells about his own bare arm. The string was strong, but the little pointed shells were sharp.

Well, if she should live to look for admiration in other men's eyes, to crave love elsewhere — if she should in thought play false, he had a remedy. He started again as the thought pressed itself upon his brain. He would kill her! Did he mean that? He flung the shells from him on the table; he knelt beside the bed, and leaned so near that he could feel her breath. And there he rested till he fell asleep, and in the early hours of the dawn rose and passed from the room silently.

To Desdemona the next few days were calm and sweet. Since her marriage Abel had never been so gentle, so considerate. He even hired a cab and took her for an hour's ride one sultry afternoon. She was lulled to a false rest, false hopes of some change by this new conduct. Alas! it was the dead calm in which the storm brewed! Oh, halcyon days!

The nights were hot and still this sum-

mer time, and often, after she went upstairs, Desdemona would sit at her open window in the dark and weave pretty hopes about the future. One night sitting thus, with her arms upon the window-sill, tired out, she fell asleep. Something weighing heavy upon her shoulder roused her. It was her husband's hand. The gas lamp below in the street shone upon his face — it was twitching in a strange way.

The girl shrank away from his touch, and he dragged her to her feet.

"Desdemony, where did you go after supper time?"

She named two or three shops in the Lane and then she paused, drooping her eyes.

"Anywhere else?" he said, tightening his grasp upon her arm.

"Yes," she said, "but I would rather not tell you now." She never lied.

"I know — I know — you damned jade!"

He struck her lightly on the cheek. She drew a long sob. He had never done that before.

"Abel, I am ill to-night — do not be unkind," she said, sobbing.

"Curse you — you went to that dispensary again — to make soft eyes at that young doctor!"

"Abel, you must be mad," she said, horror-stricken. Then came a volley of terrible oaths — words so vile, accusations so foul, that Desdemona fled away from the light of the window and crouched in a dark corner. Abel struck a match and lighted a candle. Then he pulled down the blind.

With terror-stricken eyes Desdemona watched her husband draw near, and lifted her hand to either ward off another blow or to shield herself from the hideous aspersions rained down upon her. The man looking at her hardly knew whether he loved or hated her most.

"Your mother has played double. She has taken you there again and again. Oh, yes, I know all. I watched you go to-night — I followed you. I crept to the window. You were alone this time. You sat in a big armchair and that fine fellow came and felt your pulse. He gave you some writing on a little paper. A prescription, was it? Ah! I know better. Perhaps an address where you might meet him safely. Mad, am I? Ay, I *was* mad to pick a wife from the slums and to expect to find her honest." Abel was in his shirt-sleeves, after the fashion of many publicans. Deliberately as he spoke he

began to roll up the sleeves higher. "By God," he said, "you shall not live to boast what a poor blind fool the husband is who lifted you from the gutter!"

What was he going to do? Desdemona watched him with tearless wonder. She did not sob or entreat. It was vain now to defend herself while his rage lasted. He might listen in the morning. In the morning — ah, poor child, no! She thought that he was drunk, though she had never seen him so before. Was he going to thrash her, as she had heard other drunken men thrashed their wives? Would it hurt her very much? Might it not make her ill? — and a sob came in her throat as she thought of the little child that was coming to them. And that recollection incited her to plead for pity. It was not herself alone that might suffer.

She rose slowly to her feet, holding to the wall.

"Abel," she said, with her beautiful soft eyes fixed upon his altered face, "you will not do me any harm now. I have done nothing wrong" — she put her hand in her pocket — "here is the paper — it is only the name of some medicine."

He turned his head away. "You shall never go again," he said slowly; "you have made me the mock of Spink, and hounds like him who spied upon your meetings every time."

Then he drew her to him gently and kissed her many times as though he were still her lover — on eyes, on brow, on lips. She heard the wild throbbing of his heart, she felt the heavy sweat upon his brow. His hands were cold and clammy.

"Put on the shells, Desdemona," he whispered gently, and lifted her favorite ornament from the table. "Three times round your neck — so." She obeyed his wish, thinking to humor the whim of a drunken man. She was not afraid, Abel would not hurt her now — had he not kissed her?

He blew out the light over her shoulder. Closer, closer crept his sinewy arms about her body. His right hand slipped behind her soft, white throat and grasped the treble thread of the necklace — drew it tighter — so — tighter still — how sharp the little points were — oh! horrible!

Draw we the veil — out, out brief candle!

A double tragedy, as the coroner remarked in opening the inquest. One of the inexplicable dramas of life. Murder and suicide. Verdict of the jury, "tem-

porary insanity." Most merciful verdict that our language knows.

Desdemona sleeps at peace beside her murderer, and if perchance she wakes she may find she has travelled to a far, far country. For death is oftentimes kinder than life, and in fields Elysian this sweet child of the slums may realize a land of pure delight.

H. MUSGRAVE.

From The Gentleman's Magazine.
GOETHE'S MOTHER.

1731-1808.

WHOSE heart does not throb at the sound of the word mother? Are not our finest and most unselfish feelings awakened when we are reminded of the days in which our mother nursed us with tender care and love? Yes, we know it is our mother who gives the impress of her soul not only to our youth, but to our whole life; from the cradle to the grave. It is, therefore, always interesting to trace the influence which great men have received from their mothers. But it is doubly interesting to observe this motherly influence in Goethe, because both the son and the mother were great in mind and spirit. We are told that one of her admirers, after a lengthened interview with her, exclaimed, "Now I understand how Goethe has become the man he is!" In fact, no less a man than her son himself has borne witness to and given acknowledgment of the influence which, besides grandparents and father, his mother more especially exercised upon him, in an incomparably beautiful poem, of which the translation is as follows: —

My father's stature I possess,
Life's sober government,
My darling mother's cheerfulness,
Her fabulistic bent.
My grandsire's weakness for the fair
At times of me takes hold,
With grandam the delight I share
In ornament and gold.
Since, then, those elements do all
In that complex unite,
How much that is original
Remains in the whole right?

It is the purpose of this paper to sketch the prominent features of the character of that "cheerful, darling mother" of the greatest German poet.

We have hitherto only known Goethe's mother from the little her son has told us of her in his autobiography, "Truth and Fiction" and in a few of his letters to his

friends; from what relations and acquaintances have remarked about her, and lastly from some fragments of her own letters published twenty years ago by Keil. But recently, besides those to the Duchess Anna Amalia, all the existing letters which she wrote to her son Christiane, and her grandson Augustus have been published by the Goethe Society in Weimar. These letters have been lying in the original manuscript in the Goethe archive in Weimar, the treasures of which are being brought to daylight by degrees, since the demise of the two grandsons and last descendants of Goethe a few years ago. The elder of these grandsons, Walter von Goethe, was chamberlain at the Weimar court, and a musical composer; the younger, Wolfgang Maximilian von Goethe, was secretary of legation, and a poet. The greatness of their grandfather, however, weighed oppressively upon them; the world, only acknowledging one great Goethe, did not appreciate their rich talents, in consequence of which they became melancholy. Although Goethe has burned the letters written to him by his mother and others before 1792, for he himself tells us in his diary, "before my journey to Switzerland [1797], I burned all letters directed to me since 1772, from a decided disinclination to the publication of the quiet course of friendly communication;" yet, fortunately, sufficient of his mother's letters have been preserved, which form a rich source whence we are able to draw a lovely picture of the character of the poet's mother.

Goethe once said, letters are of great value because they retain the originality of the writers. Certainly nothing reveals the character better than the intimate communications between one member of the family and another. In these the finest chords let their true and delicate notes resound. And what hearty sounds re-echo from all the letters of Goethe's mother. But nowhere has she shown herself so thoroughly frank and natural as in these letters to her son and his family. From them we receive the genuine impressions of her soul and imagine we hear the sweet-sounding words of her lips. Goethe has established a monument to his pious relative, Fräulein von Klettenberg, in an essay entitled "Confessions of a Beautiful Soul," which forms the sixth book of his "Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship." He also wished to erect a monument to his mother, "who excelled other women," as he said in the last books of his autobiography. Unfortunately he was not spared to carry

out this wish. It is true her image hovers before his mind in the shrewd, sensible housewife of his epic idyl "Hermann and Dorothea," in the Elizabeth of his drama "Goetz von Berlichingen," and other female figures of his poetical works. But in her letters his mother has raised a monument to herself more enduring than one made of iron or marble. We may give these letters the title, "Confessions of a Cheerful Soul." She has often signed herself "Frau Aja Wohlgenuth," for "Wohlgenut" — good-tempered — was her nature, and "Aja" she was once called by the Counts Stolberg, two brothers and friends of her son, because as Aja, in the legend of the four sons of Haimon, she offered them excellent wine in silver cups.

Catherine Elizabeth Textor, this interesting and noble figure in German literature, was born in 1731, and was the elder daughter of the mayor of the free imperial city of Frankfurt-on-Main. She was only seventeen and a half years old when she was married to the imperial councillor and doctor juris Johann Kaspar Goethe, who was twenty years her senior. Frau Rat, as she was thenceforth called, was active and vigorous, bright and pretty, of slender form, with brown hair and dark, lustrous eyes with a penetrating glance which her son inherited from her. The whole expression of her face betrayed benevolence and yet shrewdness and knowledge of character; she was at once grave and cheerful, dignified and simple. The celebrated Kaulbach has portrayed her most faithfully in his picture, "Goethe on the Ice," as with motherly pride she watches her son, who is skating away with her mantle over his shoulders of which he has playfully robbed her. Her husband was of a serious disposition, truth-loving and upright, but formal and pedantic, who in his domestic circle carried on a somewhat autocratic regimen. Elizabeth had accepted him, without much love, on the advice of her parents, who wished her to be married to this much respected and wealthy imperial councillor. At first the household management was left to the care of her aged mother-in-law, who, being of a benevolent nature, soon became attached to and befriended her daughter-in-law, thus helping to make her new home happy. She is the grandmother who, as Goethe tells us, gave him and his sister Cornelia many presents, especially the famous puppet-show with which she surprised them on the Christmas eve of 1753, and "which created a new world in

the house." The pedantry of the imperial councillor caused his young wife many an uncomfortable hour. He not only made her practise the piano and singing, but also spelling, notwithstanding which she never learnt to write quite orthographically. She recognized, however, in all this his honest love towards her, and responded to his feeling with sincere affection and respect; for nature had endowed her with a warm and noble heart, a cheerful mind, a powerful imagination, vivid mother-wit, and above all with a joyous trust in God. She was the delight of children, the favorite of poets and princes, and beloved of all who came into contact with her. Wieland, the greatest poet of his time, who travelled from Weimar to Frankfurt on purpose to make the acquaintance of Frau Rat, praises her as the dearest of all mothers, the queen among women, and the crown of her sex. The Duchess Anna Amalia considered the day on which she received a letter from her as a day of rejoicing. Genial as she was, she became the good genius sent from heaven to her husband. Once, through her tact and cheerfulness, she actually prevented serious mischief which threatened her husband in consequence of his abrupt behavior to the king's lieutenant, Count Thorane, who was quartered in Goethe's house in the Seven Years' War in 1759.

With the birth of her son Wolfgang her life's joy and happiness really began. She became the playmate of this son, and with him she once more enjoyed her childhood. "I and my Wolfgang," she said, "have always held fast to each other, because we were both young, and not as many years apart as Wolfgang and his father." She was her son's first and best teacher, as every mother should be. He praises her tact in educating children in his autobiography, where he relates the following: "The old, many-cornered, and gloomy arrangement of the house was moreover adapted to awaken dread and terror in childish minds. Unfortunately, too, the principle of discipline that young persons should be early deprived of all fear for the awful and invisible, and accustomed to the terrible, still prevailed. We children, therefore, were compelled to sleep alone, and when we found this impossible, and softly slipped from our beds to seek the society of the servants and maids, our father, with his dressing-gown turned inside out, which disguised him sufficiently for the purpose, placed himself in the way and frightened us back to our resting-

places. The evil effect of this any one may imagine. How is he, who is encompassed with a double terror, to be emancipated from fear? My mother, always cheerful and gay, and willing to render others so, discovered a much better pedagogical expedient. She managed to gain her end by rewards. It was the season for peaches, the plentiful enjoyment of which she promised us every morning if we overcame our fears during the night. In this way she succeeded, and both parties were satisfied." In another direction her influence upon her son was even still greater. For she transmitted to him her love of story telling, and in cultivating his imagination in a most original way she laid a good foundation for the development of his poetical genius. She would relate to him a tale, leaving its completion to the following day. Then Wolfgang would use his own imagination, and confide in his grandmother how he thought the tale would end. The latter again told his mother, and so, to the boy's delight, she would let it end as he had imagined. This loving interest in his education was not only with him at home, but accompanied him to the university and a good way along his glorious career; and after the early death of her daughter, 1777, and of her husband, 1782, her love was concentrated in her son, who became her comfort, her joy, and her just pride. When he was taken away from her to Weimar, in 1775, by the Duke Karl August, her unselfish love becomes apparent in the charming letters which she wrote to him and his dear ones. We can imagine that she did not like her son to live at such a distance from her, notwithstanding the liberal conditions that the duke granted him, and the bright prospects that were in store for him. She therefore writes to tell him what his genial friend War Councillor Merck, the prototype of his Mephistopheles, had said to her: "You should try all means to get him back again; the infamous Weimar climate is certainly not good for him. He has accomplished his principal business, for the duke is now as he ought to be. Let another do the remaining disagreeable work; Goethe is too good for it." Being afraid her son was not well, she becomes restless, until she receives a letter from him which tells her that he is all right, whereupon she answers: "One word instead of a thousand. You must know best what is for your benefit. As I have control over my affairs, and am able to supply you with the means of leading a quiet and comfortable life, you can easily

imagine how it would grieve me if you were to spend your health and strength in the duke's service. The shallow regret afterwards would certainly not make me fat. I am no heroine, but with Chilian* I consider life a fine thing. On the other hand, to tear you away from your present occupation would be equally unreasonable. Now you are your own master. Prove all things and hold fast what is good." When the French armies had overrun south Germany, in 1797, she writes: "We live quite undisturbed and are in hopes of remaining what we are. I for my own part am quite contented, and let things which I cannot alter go their own way. Weimar is the only place in the wide world from whence my peace could be disturbed; if my dear ones there are well, the right and left banks of the Rhine may belong to whomever they please; that does not affect my sleep nor my appetite, and if I only receive good news from you from time to time, I shall be of good cheer, and shall in truth be able to sing all my remaining days: 'Enjoy life while the lamp is still aglow, pluck the roses ere they fade.'"[†] In the beginning of 1801, when Goethe had recovered from a serious illness, she sends him the following characteristic letter: "Dear son,—Your recovery, and moreover a letter by your own hand, have made me so happy that I write to you by return of post. The 6th of February, when I received your dear letter, was a day of rejoicing, of prayer and thanksgiving for me. I could not possibly keep this great happiness to myself. I went to Syndicus Schlosser's in the evening, communicated the cause of my gladness to them, and received their hearty congratulations. Our whole town was alarmed at your illness, and as soon as your recovery was announced, newspapers poured into my room, every one wishing to be the first to bring me the glad tidings. Only God knows what I felt. I suppose you have forgotten the verse you found the first day of your arrival at Strasburg, with your health still in a precarious state, when you opened the little book which Councillor Moritz had given you as a keepsake. You wrote to me saying you were deeply moved. I remember it exactly, it was a quotation from Isa. liv. 2, 3: 'Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt

spread abroad on thy right hand and the left.' Blessed be the Lord, who has strengthened the stakes again, and lengthened the cords anew. Once more, sincere thanks for your dear letter. Do let me know from time to time how you are. Love to my dear daughter and Augustus, and the Lord further strengthen you, which is the daily wish and prayer of your joyful loving mother, Goethe."

This great love towards her son is also transferred to Christiane, to whom she writes the most affectionate letters. After the terrible days following the battle of Jena (October 22, 1806), when Christiane behaved so bravely, he was religiously married to her. He communicated this to his mother, whereupon she replies: "For your new state of marriage I send you my heartiest congratulations, and wish you all blessing. In this you have acted according to my heart's wish. The Lord keep you! I herewith send you my sincere motherly blessing; for the blessing of the mother establisheth the houses of the children. You must content yourself with this wish for the present, as I can do no more in these troublous times; but have patience, the cheques which I have received from the Lord will be duly honored; this is as certain as that now, while I write this, the sun is shining. Depend upon it, you shall be satisfied with your portion. Give my affectionate love to my dear daughter, tell her that I love, esteem, and honor her, and would have written to her myself if we were not in a continuous hurly-burly." To her grandson Augustus, she, the delight and favorite of children, writes most loving letters, couched in words suitable to the understanding of a child. She encourages him to send her descriptions of what he has seen; and when he does this in his childlike way, she has many words of praise for him. To the boy, five years old, she writes: "Dear August,—It is very praiseworthy of you to have written such a sweet, dear little letter to your grandma. I never thought that you were already so clever. . . . As a reward for your beautiful letter I will send you some sweets. You must study very well, and become very clever; you will soon grow big, and then you can bring me the *Journals* and *Mercuries* yourself. Good-bye; give my love to father and mother.—Your affectionate grandma, Elizabetha Goethe." When Augustus is seven years old, she writes: "Whenever I receive such a well and distinctly written exercise book from you, I rejoice that you are so clever to describe

* Kilian Brustfleck, a writer of merry comedies.

† The first lines of a popular German song.

things in so orderly and lucid a manner." Then, after exhorting him to be an obedient boy and to pray to God to keep father and mother in good health, she continues: "Your dear father has never given me trouble and sorrow, therefore the dear God has blessed and raised him above many, many others, and has made him great and renowned; so that all good people truly esteem him. Now, my dear Augst., I am sure you will exert yourself to the utmost to follow your dear father's good example, and become equally good." When Augustus, after having paid her a visit in Frankfurt in 1805, left for Weimar, she gave him the following characteristic testimonial: "I, the undersigned, publicly acknowledge by this letter that Julius Augustus von Goethe, the bearer of this, has behaved so well and exemplary during his stay here that he appears to have inherited the ring in the fable in 'Nathan the Wise' [by Lessing] which makes him who possesses it the beloved of God and man. That this is the case with the above-mentioned J. A. von Goethe, certifies herewith his loving grandmother, Elizabeth Goethe."

She takes the most lively interest in the literary products of her son; the seed she has sown in his youthful soul now bears rich fruit. She longs for each of his works, and when she receives one she first reads it by herself, then once more with her friends in a literary circle where the dramatic works are read in parts and their merits discussed. She notices that her son has adopted some of her peculiar expressions in his writings. On the other hand, she is so familiar with his works that she often quotes passages from them in her conversations and in her letters. Once she writes: "Yes, dear Augst., if I knew where to find Doctor Faust's mantle, I would come to see you." Another time (October 10, 1805) she says: "About twenty years ago Mephistopheles sang in Dr. Faust:—

The dear old Roman realm,
How does it hold together?

At present one may justly ask this question: The prince electors and the princes run to and fro, the world is upside down, palaces and thrones do slope their heads to their foundations, all is turning like a whirligig, the time is out of joint. One does not know with whom to side; but everything will be set right again, for the dear Father above wisely prevents the trees from growing into heaven." Her interest increases as more works arrive

from Weimar. When she had received the poems she wrote (April 17, 1807): "I read the first volume of the lyrical poems over and over again. The three riders who come forth from under the bed, in the 'Wedding Song,' I see bodily; 'The Bride of Corinth,' 'The Bayadere,' the [original] beginning of the 'Sea Voyage' — 'For days and nights my ship stood frightened,' 'The Magician's Apprentice,' the 'Ratcatcher' and all the other poems make me inexpressibly happy." Not content with what is sent her, she repeatedly asks her son to forward new poems. She tells him, "You do a good work to send me new products; there is a great literary dearth here, and your fountain with its fulness of water will quench my thirst." "We thank God," she continues, "for the crumbs that fall from your table." She is quite taken up with "Wilhelm Meister," for which she sends her hearty thanks, saying "that was once more a joy for me; I felt thirty years younger, saw you and the other boys making preparations for the puppet-show in the third story, the elder Mors whipping Elise Bethmann, and other reminiscences. If I could fully describe my feelings, you would greatly rejoice at having caused your mother to enjoy such a happy day. Also the romances which Reichardt has set to music gave me great pleasure, especially the one beginning with the words

What hear I sound outside the gate,
What voices on the bridge?

which I sang the whole day. Once more, then, my very best thanks." But, above all, she loves the epic idyl, "Hermann and Dorothea;" she feels it is a reflection of her own soul, and she writes: "It is a masterpiece without equal. I carry it with me as a cat does her kittens. Next Sunday I shall take it with me to Stock's; they will jump for joy. Our senior minister, Dr. Hufnagel, has married a couple with the words with which Hermann and Dorothea were united, saying that he knew no better wedding address. He considers that all who do not possess it, and do not carry it about with them, are Hottentots." She is greatly pleased each time she hears that her son has gone to Jena, in order to be in the company of Schiller. For he once told her that there his literary products ripen. Thus she writes: "I rejoice that you are in and about Jena again; there another 'Hermann,' or some such work, will no doubt be produced." It is interesting to know what she thinks of Schiller; she writes: "Remember me

to Schiller, and tell him that I esteem him highly; I love his writings, for they are and remain to me a true comfort. You and Schiller have given me an extraordinary pleasure by your not replying to the twiddle-twaddle which the Berlin critics brought forward against you. Let them go to the wall. You did right, and I hope you will continue to ignore them. Your works will remain for eternity, whilst their poor stuff is nothing but rubbish; it tears whilst one holds it in one's hand, and is not worth binding." Schiller, who, like all others, was charmed with his friend's mother, once writing about her, said: "We found her simple, hearty nature most interesting." Her high opinion of her son's worth is also shown after her removal from the house in the "Hirschgraben" to that of the "Golden Fountain," when she writes: "In the reading-room your bust is put up between those of Wieland and Herder, three names which Germany will always mention with reverence." She little knew how much greater her son would be considered by posterity than the two poets whom she thought his equals. Her love and respect for him do not, however, prevent her from criticising him sometimes. Thus she warns him not to let his writings be printed in Latin types, saying: "Now a word as to our conversation when you were here, concerning the Roman characters. I will explain to you what mischief they do to the general reader. They are like an aristocratic pleasure garden which nobody but noblemen and people with stars and orders may enter. Our German letters are like the Prater [the well-known public park presented to the town of Vienna by Joseph II.] over the gates of which the emperor had inscribed, 'For All People.' If your works had been printed in these odious aristocrats, they would not have become so popular, with all their excellence. Tailors, seamstresses, servants, all read them, and every one finds something suitable in them. Enough: they walk with the *Jena Literary News*, Dr. Hufnagel, and others pell mell in the Prater, enjoy themselves, bless the author, and cheer him. . . . Remain, then, faithful to German habits, to German letters; for if Roman letters continue, within fifty years German will be neither spoken nor written, and you and Schiller will become classic authors like Horace, Livy, Ovid, and the others, for where there is no language there is no people. How the professors will pluck you to pieces, interpret, and drum you into the heads of the scholars. Therefore

speak, write, and print in German as long as it is possible."*

The glorious works of her son surround also the mother with a halo in which many would like to bask. She becomes not only a centre of adoration, which is due to the mother of Goethe, but is often troubled for recommendations to her son by people who travel to Weimar. Students, teachers, actors, opera singers, and others come to her with the same request. Once Goethe, having found these intruders too many, complained to his mother that she had not the courage to refuse any one; he said that whilst she saved those people a box on the ear, they got a hole in the head. But the goodness of her heart and the pleasure to serve others are indefatigable, and she expects the like of her son. There comes an innkeeper, and begs her to ask her son to help him to recover the money somebody owes him who has wealthy brothers in Weimar. She humorously writes: "If you can be of any assistance to your countryman in this affair, he will relate it to the 'burgher captains,' [allusion to a Frankfurt local comedy of this title] and that class of people who drink wine at his inn will praise their gracious countryman." Above all, the professors who pass through Frankfurt visit Frau Rat. Concerning these visits she writes her son an original and characteristic letter in October, 1807: "This autumn fair was rich in professors. As a great part of your renowned name is reflected upon me, and these people imagine I have contributed something to your great talent, they come to have a good look at me. Then I do not put my light under a bushel, but on a candlestick. Certainly I assure the people that I have not contributed in the least to what made you a great man and poet, for I never accept the praise which is not due to me. Moreover, I well know to whom praise and thanks are due, for I have done nothing towards the natural growth of the germs from which you were developed in your mother's womb. Perhaps a grain of brain more or less, and you might have become quite an ordinary man, and wherein there is nothing, nothing can come out; for however much you may educate, all the educational institutions of Europe cannot bestow talent or genius. I grant

* The good Frau Rat was not aware that what she called German were originally Latin letters, and had only received their elaborate shape from the monks of the Middle Ages. In spite of hers and Prince Bismarck's predilection for the so-called German types, I think it would be better if the Roman characters superseded the German, both in schools and practical life.

they may produce good and useful men; but here we speak of extraordinary ones. Therein good Frau Aja gives glory and honor to God, as is just and right. Now to my light which I placed on the candlestick, and your professors like to behold. The gift with which God has endowed me is to give a vivid description of things of which I possess a knowledge, whether great or small, truth or fiction. As soon as I enter a social circle, all become joyous and cheerful whilst I relate. Thus I talked to the professors, and they went away contented; that is my whole art. Yet another thing belongs to it; I always show a friendly face, which pleases people and costs no money, as said your late friend Merck." Among her prominent qualities we find a sense for order and business. "Everything beautiful in its time" may serve as her motto. Regularly as the autumn returns she sends chestnuts and Indian corn and other seasonable fruits to her dear ones in Weimar, and as soon as November draws to a close she despatches the box with Christmas presents. We can still see from the three stout quarto volumes preserved in the Goethe archive, how well she kept her household accounts, a habit which she acquired from her orderly husband. In a letter to Freiherr von Stein she says: "Order and composure are my principal characteristics. Hence I despatch at once whatever I have to do, the most disagreeable always first, and I gulp down the devil without looking at him. When everything has resumed its proper condition, then I defy any one to surpass me in good humor." Being of a practical and economical nature, she also had a capacity for business, which is shown by the way she sold her house in the Hirschgraben, and the wines stored up in its cellars, at the highest price, after the death of her husband. When Goethe intended to buy a very large estate, she dissuades him: "For," she says, "you are no agriculturist, you have other favorite occupations, and will easily be imposed upon. If you wish to have an estate, must it be one for such an enormous price? When you were here you spoke of a much smaller one, but one for forty-five thousand Reichsthaler* made me feel quite dizzy. Once more, do as you like, but don't yield to useless regret when the thing is done." She is active and industrious, always busy, and cannot lay her hands idly in her lap. She is sixty years old, and still finds some-

thing to do. She has four hobbies, as she herself relates: "Firstly, making Brussels lace, which I have learned in my old days, and which gives me childlike pleasure; secondly, piano playing, then reading books, and lastly chess, a game which I had given up, but have lately taken to again." She reads the best authors, whereby she gains considerable knowledge; is acquainted with ancient and modern literature; quotes chapter and verse from the Bible, her favorite book, and even understands the Hebrew text. Once she corrects Luther's translation. This makes the Lord say to Cain: "Why do you disguise your face?" But she found out that according to the Hebrew original it is "Why is thy countenance fallen" (as the English version has it). She often alludes to Greek history and mythology, and is familiar with Shakespeare and the modern poets, and with delight quotes from her great son's writings. She dislikes the common pleasures of the senses, more especially the banquettings which were in vogue. "The god of most of my countrymen," she writes, "is their belly; they are veritable epicures. The finest academy for painting and drawing might be built for the money spent on these carousals, which resemble ennui like one drop of water the other." And yet in spite of her dislike of such social gatherings, all people, high or low, find her interesting. In a modest way she describes herself in a letter to her daughter-in-law, "I am," she says, "thanks be to God, very well. I do not understand how it is, but I am loved, esteemed, and sought after by so many people that I am often a riddle to myself and do not know what they admire in me; enough it is so, and I enjoy this human goodness, thank God, and spend my days in contentment." In July, 1799, the king and his celebrated consort, Queen Luisa of Prussia, came to Frankfurt. The latter sent her brother, the hereditary prince of Mecklenburg, to Frau Rat to invite her to visit the queen. Frau Rat reports to her son as follows: "The prince came about noon and dined with me at my small table. At six o'clock he drove me to the Taxische Palace in the royal carriage, two lackeys standing behind us. The queen conversed with me of former times, remembered the pleasure she had in my former house, the good pancakes, etc. Dear me, what effect such things have upon people! This visit was at once reported in all coffee and wine houses, in all large and small societies. During the first few days nothing else was

* An obsolete German coin, in value about 3s. 6d.

talked of but that the queen had invited Frau Rat for a visit through the hereditary prince of Mecklenburg. You can imagine how I was questioned to tell all that had been transacted; in one word, I had a nimbus round my head which became me well."

In June, 1803, she was again invited by the queen to Wilhelmsbad, and, after describing her reception, she continues: "When I was in full glee, who came in? Our Duke of Weimar! God, what joy that was for me; oh, how well and affectionately he spoke of you! I thanked him with fervor for the kindness he had shown you during your last serious illness. He said, with emotion, that you had done the same to him all those thirty years you and he had been attached to each other. I was so excited that I could have laughed and cried at the same time. Whilst I was in this mood the queen called me into another room, the king also came in; the former opened a case, and—now astonishing!—taking out a costly necklace, she fastened it round my neck with her own hands. Touched to tears, I could hardly thank her sufficiently. . . . It is impossible to tell you all that happened on that glorious day. Enough. I arrived home in the evening happy and elated."

The letters from which we have quoted show us her simple, joyous, and affectionate nature—the cause of her popularity. We will now mention some of those expressions of hers which sound like sentences of pleasant proverbial wisdom, and to which we can apply the verse, "she openeth her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue." Once she says: "I am well and content, and bear with patience what I cannot alter." Another time: "As we are not able to stop the spokes of the wheel of fortune, and are powerless to retard its motion, it would be folly to cry over it. Oh, there are still many joys on God's earth, if one only understands to seek them; and if one does not despise small mercies, one is sure to find them. How many joys are spoiled, because people mostly look above them, and ignore what is below?" This sentiment she calls "a sauce of Frau Aja's cookery." "Sacred and profane authors," she says, "exhort us to enjoy life. The former say: 'He that is of a cheerful heart hath a continual feast' (Proverbs xv. 15), and in Goetz von Berlichingen [by Goethe] we read, 'cheerfulness is the mother of all virtues.'" "Would to God," she remarks, "I could make all mankind joyous and contented;

how happy I should feel! I love cheerful people; if I were a sovereign, I would imitate Julius Cæsar, and only have happy faces at my court. For, as a rule, those people are good whose conscience makes them happy. I fear persons with down-cast brow, they remind me of Cain." In a charming letter to Frau von Stein, she says: "God has given me grace to make all happy who come to me, of whatever rank, age, or sex. I am fond of people, and every one feels that immediately. I pass without pretension through the world, and that gratifies men. I never act the moralist towards any one, always seek out the good that is in them, and leave what is bad to him who made mankind, and who knows best how to round off the angles. In this way I make myself happy and comfortable. . . . I enjoy life while its lamp is still aglow, seek no thorns, and catch the small joys; if the door is low, I stoop down; if I can remove the stone out of my way, I do so; if it is too heavy, I go round it; and thus every day I find something which gladdens me; and the corner-stone, the belief in God, makes my heart glad and my countenance cheerful."

From this, her happy nature, arises her calmness and fearlessness. In spite of the continuous war troubles and the presence of hostile soldiers quartered in her house, she keeps up her spirits and is of good courage. Her son inherited this Olympian calm from her and his dislike of unnecessary agitation and emotion. Amid the roar of cannon at the bombardment of Verdun his mind is occupied with the study of colors. Her sunny nature shrank from storms. "I hate perturbation of mind," she said, "more than all the *sans culottes* in the grand French army, who could not disturb one of my nights' rests. I have, thank God, never been timid, and now I do not wish to grow so; we must wait and see; in the mean time we will accept the good days and not grieve before the time; one moment may change all. Fear is infectious like influenza, and always makes the plural out of a singular; it still does as it did four thousand years ago (2 Kings vii. 6) when the Syrians said: 'Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Egyptians.' They said kings instead of king, their fear imagining the danger to be greater than it really was. In order, therefore, not to let my head be turned, I avoid having cowardly fear as my companion. It is a common place where every goose and every hair-brained fellow may contribute his mite of tittle-

tattle. As a child to whom the nurse has told a ghost story is afraid of a white sheet on the wall, so people here believe everything, if it is only sufficiently terrible, but whether it is true or not they do not investigate." Then continuing, she gives an amusing incident of fear. "Frau Elise Bethmann came in hot haste and breathless into my bedroom in the night of January 3 [1795], crying, 'Dear Raetin, I must acquaint you with the great danger threatening us. The enemy are bombarding Mannheim with fiery balls. The commander of the town has said that he cannot hold out any longer than three days.' . . . I remained quite calm, and coolly asked, 'How can they bombard Mannheim? For they have no batteries; do they shoot from over the low banks of the Rhine? In this case the balls will be cold before they have passed the broad river, and what the commander intends to do he will scarcely make public. Whence does your correspondent know this? Write him he is a coward.'" All these great traits of character had their origin in her firm belief in God. Her son said of her in a letter to Zelter, January 9, 1824: "In every one of her letters is seen the character of a woman who in an Old Testament fear of God has spent a useful life, full of trust in the unchangeable, national, and family God." She herself writes, in one of her remarkable letters to her son, in 1806: "This trust in God has never left me in the lurch, and this faith is the sole source of my continuous cheerfulness. In the present state of affairs a great support is necessary. Upon whom else shall one rely? Upon our crowned heads? They give one, indeed, little comfort. I am not deceived, for I have not placed my trust upon them. With my monarch neither capital nor interest is lost. He is my true support." And now only one more passage from a letter to her daughter-in-law. "You see," she says, "from this that grandmother still enjoys life, and why should I not be happy on God's beautiful earth? It would be base ingratitude for all the benefits which he has granted me during my life; and in praising and thanking God I will spend my remaining days until the curtain falls." Yes, until the curtain of this happy life's drama fell, and even when dying this great woman preserved her calm and religious mind and her joyous humor, the faithful and comforting companions of her life. When upon her express wish, the physician had told her the time that death might enter, she ordered everything for her funeral

with great exactness, and even settled the sort of wine and the size of cakes for the refreshment of those who should accompany her to the grave. According to a not improbable legend, a friend, thinking, no doubt, that the illness of Frau Rat was not serious, sent her an invitation on the morning of her death, to which the dying lady replied, as a last revelation of her happy nature: "Frau Rat cannot come; she is busy dying." Thus she departed, calm and fearless in death as she was in life. But although death removes also the great ones from the midst of mankind, there is no annihilation in this removal, for the remembrance of their character and their deeds is immortal. In this sense Frau Aja Wohlgemut is not dead. Her life's memory remains with future generations, and the picture of her character will move the æsthetic and ethical interest of man. In her are fulfilled the concluding words of the greatest work of her great son:—

All things transitory,
But as symbols are sent;
Earth's insufficiency
Here grows to event;
The indescribable,
Here it is done.
The woman-soul leadeth us
Upward and on!

JOSEPH STRAUSS.

From Temple Bar.
MY JURNY TO FRANCE, FLANDERS, AND
GERMANY, IN 1739.

A MANUSCRIPT with the above heading came lately into my possession, its thick, parchment-like paper, with the faded ink, together with the bountiful sprinkling of capital letters and legible though crabbed writing, distinguishing it at the first glance from any production of a less venerable date. It helps us to realize the distance in time separating us from the writer when we remember that in the year in which this "Jurny" was undertaken, Dr. Johnson was still a young man, unknown to fame, and spelling had not yet been put into a strait waistcoat. Men spelt very much as they pleased, and no man made them ashamed. Fielding had not yet written his first novel, nor had Pamela yet emerged from her author's brain to run her career of triumph.

In those days the world was a much larger ball than it is now, and a month's hard travelling did not take a man over any great extent of its surface, judged at

least by our modern standards of distance. The journal before us contains no clue as to who or what the writer was, nor can much be gathered from it as to his personality, but it is evident that he was travelling on the Continent for the first time. Setting out with a companion at 4 o'clock on an August morning "from y^e Cross Keys in Grace Church St," they reached Canterbury by coach that evening, and "lay at y^e Red Lion, where we had nothing good."

The next evening they sailed from Dover, taking more than three hours to cross, and on reaching Calais "y^e Gates being shut, we lay at a House on y^e Shore, where we had but indifferent Lodging." At Calais they went to see a nunnery, where he saw several nuns "seemingly very Devout fine women." Observe his cautious expression "seemingly!" He knew too well that things are not always what they seem, and from this we may infer that he was probably not very young. In the convent he bought "a purse of silk and Gold, y^e Work of an English Nun — a pretty, clean Lass, for which I paid 10s. 6d." — the more cheerfully, no doubt, for the sake of her pretty face.

From Calais the travellers hired a post-chaise to Paris for two and a half guineas. "Also paid 5 livres to y^e Postillion each Post, which is about 5 English Miles." Four days were spent on the road. Boulogne, even at that time, we find had the reputation of being what he calls "y^e English mint for Bankrupts, who, at y^e Expence of their Creditors, expend a great Deal of Money."

He appears to have been struck by the number of crucifixes and Madonnas by the wayside, as well as by the number of beggars, and by the fact of their being "few or no Gentlemens Houses, but large fine Convents. None of y^e Middle sort of People, but generally Poor, and very Superstitious and Ignorant. . . . Very thin crops of Corn, which y^e People were carrying in *although it was Sunday*." How came he to be travelling on Sunday? He makes no comment on that. At Picquigny he went to see the Cathedral, "said to be y^e finest Church in France, where they showed us y^e Real Head of John y^e Baptist in a Gold Box adorned with Jewells. Y^e people that went up with us upon their Knees kist y^e Gold Box, and Behaved with a sort of Adoration. But it seems there is two more of these Real Heads elsewhere."

At Chantilly he saw the tombs of the kings of France, and tells us that "there

was a Solemn Mass for y^e Repose of Lewis y^e 14th Soule, which is to be repeated till y^e next King dies."

Arrived at Paris he took lodgings in the Rue Dauphine at fifteen livres a week, "and paid a Footman per day 12 livres and finde Himselfe." These wages seem disproportionately high as compared both with the price of lodgings and with the cost of living, for he writes: "Pd for Dinner, 6 Dishes, 15d, for Supper 1s, for Breakfast as much Bohea Tea as you will, for they Bring y^e Canister, and Bread and Butter, 6d." Coaches, too, were to be hired at twelve livres a day, from all of which it is clear that footmen were very expensive luxuries.

The Paris streets he describes as "well paved with flat Stones, but chiefly Narrow, and no Posts to keep off y^e Coaches," so that it cannot have been very pleasant for foot passengers.

When they went to see "y^e Waterworks played off, y^e Ladies were carried in Sedans fixt upon two Wheels, with a Swiss before and behind having hold of y^e Poles," an invention differing apparently very slightly from the modern jiricksha. No doubt they went at a good pace, for he adds: "I followed them, and it being a Hot day and a Crowd of People, I was thoroughly sweated, but it is, I think, y^e finest Show I have seen."

As to the fashion in dress then prevailing, he tells us that "y^e women wear very Large Hoops, white under petticoats, white Stockings and Slippers; Sacks of Slight Silks or Chints, Gauze Head cloaths, short Gauze Cloaks, Long and broad Ruffles, and *Paint very red*. Y^e men from y^e Highest to y^e Lowest wear Ruffles, Tyed Bags, Pigtails, or Brigadier Wiggs, Edged Hats and white Stockings."

The wigs seem to have been a considerable and constant expense; such entries as these frequently occur, "Pd for a Bagg Wigg, bought of M. Gigott of Paris, a Louis d'Or, and for a Bagg 3½ livres." "Bought a light Full Tye Wigg at 50 Gilders." "Sent for a Barber, and y^e Boy brought a fine Fellow with blue Cloak, ruffles and Brainbag. When he had Shaved us, which he did very fine, we gave him our Wiggs to Combe, but he refused, and said he was a Surgeon. So we pd him 3d each and sent y^e Wiggs to a Periwigg-maker." On another occasion, however, they fell in with a surgeon who was not such a fine fellow, and did not so stand on his dignity; it was near Elberfeld, when the journalist's companion had "fallen with his Horse from a High Bank,

and was like to have been killed. As soon as he come to Elberfeld he was blooded and put to Bed, and for a Week attended three times a day by a Doctor and a Surgeon. Ye Surgeon also shaved us and powdered our Wiggs during our stay there, about 10 days, for which we gave them 2 Ducats each, and they thought themselves well Paid. Doctors and Surgeons you have cheap. Nobody gives above a shilling a visit, and some but 6d."

To our modern ears this scale of payment sounds assuredly low — but possibly it was an equivalent for the services rendered. When, however, it is remembered that a footman was paid twelve livres a day it seems as if doctors certainly had cause for discontent.

Wine, like doctoring, was also cheap. Our journalist dined with a French gentleman, who said, "he gave for Languedoc Wine 4d. a Quart, bought 2 or 3 Dozen at once, and 8d. a Quart for best Bordeaux Claret — both very good." Getting drunk in a gentlemanly manner was apparently not a costly amusement, which may partly have accounted for it being such a common one.

The Paris Opera was from his account a very humble institution in the early part of last century. It was "a small place in ye Duke of Orleans Palace, but crowded with People. No Acting, only Singing and Dancing. For Musick 3 or 4 Fiddles, base Viol and Bassoon." Another night he went to see "a French play. A very small place. The People all stand in ye Pitt, there are no seats. In one thing they differ from us, they don't in their Tragedys kill any Body upon ye Stage in sight." Was this from a desire to avoid harrowing the feelings of the audience? or was it a tradition of stage management handed down from the ancient classic drama of Greece?

The writer was a true John Bull in his likings and prejudices; he mentions a dinner at a French gentleman's where they "had 16 Dishes, and as many for Dessert, but could scarce eat of any one, they being Drest after ye French Fashion, *which is to spoyle good victuals.*" Neither had he much more to say in favor of the French style of singing, for he records a visit to a house "where Madam played a Tune on ye Harpsicord and sung a song. She sang in ye french Way, *that is hooting or squalling.*"

The practice of abstaining from flesh meat on Fridays seems at that time to have commonly extended to Saturdays as well, for he more than once alludes to it

as a grievance. "Dined on Fish drest in different ways, ye Butter all turned to Oyle, for in these popish Countries we could have no Flesh on *Fridays or Saturdays.*" "They don't commonly bring knives to ye Table, only a Silver Fork with 4 prongs, and a Spoon." (We thought the four-pronged fork was a modern improvement on the one with two prongs, or three; but it can only have been a tardy English adoption of the French pattern.) "They hant much occasion for knives for they Roast and Boyle their Meat to Raggs; you may almost shake it to pieces."

The beds he said had so many mattresses one upon another "that one had need have a Ladder to get to Bed, and they lay 3 great Pillows which raises one almost upright."

On August 15 he dined at Versailles and "payd dear for everything, it being ye Day that Don Philip of Spain was marryed to one of ye Mesdames of France. They asked us 8 livres for a little Legg of Mutton and a Louis for a Hare. They told us Don Philip is 19 and Madame 12. Went into ye Gardens to see ye Fireworks which were very Pretty and well conducted. Ye Royall Family [Louis XV.] with ye Spanish Embassador and Cardinal Fleury were in ye Long Gallery to see ye Show. They said ye Fireworks cost ye King 3 million of livres, which I don't believe, ye French being very apt to enlarge upon everything belonging to their Country."

Incredulous as he seems to have been where the French were concerned, he relates some very remarkable stories without throwing any doubt upon them. Whether or not he felt any we cannot discover. He tells us that the 28th of August is annually kept at Valenciennes "in memory of ye great Deliverance of ye Town from a Pestilence that had destroyed almost all ye People. They say ye Virgin Mary sent a Cord from Heaven by Angells to a Hermit that lived in a Cave near ye Town, with order for him to girt ye Town therewith, which he did, and ye Plague was stayed. This Miracle was wrought about ye 3rd Century, and ye Cord has ever since been kept in a Fine silver Coffre made for that Purpose in ye great Church."

Perhaps with him as with so many persons, seeing was believing, and having himself seen the cord, he felt that scepticism would be out of place.

At Cologne he of course saw the bones of St. Ursula's ill-fated nuns who were slain by the Huns. This slaughter of eleven thousand virgins at once ma-

terially have affected the statistics by reducing so greatly the excess of unmarried women. The legend tells us that St. Ursula was the daughter of a British king, and that being herself a Christian she fled in order to avoid being married to a heathen suitor who found favor with her father. At this point of her history the most believing mind must wonder why she hampered herself in her flight by taking with her into foreign parts eleven thousand helpless young women, none of whom, we may assume, knew any language but their own. She was a young lady of many resources, however, as it is clear she must have managed to get them across the Channel somehow or another, otherwise they could not all have been slain, as they were, at Cologne.

Our diarist tells us that he saw their heads piled up in glass cases as they are even unto this day, and then proceeds: "They say St Ambrose took 3 of these Heads to his Episcopal See some miles from here, and when he Dyed the Bells of Cologne rang of themselves, and y^e 3 Heads returned and placed themselves in y^e Chappell from whence they had been taken. A daughter of y^e then Earl of Flanders desired to be buried in this Chappell, which was done, but y^e Ground being so Pure as not to suffer any but Pure Virgins to lye there, cast her up."

He goes on to speak of a crucifix he saw there of life size, and adds: "They say y^e Hair in 7 years grows Very Long, which they then cut, and People as far as Hungary come for a Lock of it."

Even in these popish countries he found himself compelled to admire the security to person and property enjoyed by travellers, contrasting it, no doubt, with the state of things at home, where Jack Sheppard's exploits were still fresh in men's minds, while Dick Turpin had only a few months ago ended on the scaffold his brilliant career of crime. He writes: "One convenience there is, one may Travell without fear of being Robbed. Y^e Reason is that y^e Thief is allways caught, and if Convicted, allways executed forthwith." This illustration of cause and effect proves admirably the advantage of summary punishment, and may be commended to the consideration of judges and magistrates in these weak-kneed days. Justice, besides being prompt, had certainly no undue leaning to the side of mercy in those times. This is how theft was punished: "A criminall was convicted here of stealing Cambrick off y^e Whiting ground, and was Strippt, and in a Cart whipt round

y^e Town, then brought back before y^e Town House, where y^e Magistrates stood to see him Burnt on y^e Shoulder with a Flower de Luce and sent to y^e Gallys for Life."

The Netherlands were at that time under the dominion of Austria, and an archduchess of the imperial house was holding high state at Brussels. Our journalist while there went to court to see her eat her dinner, which cannot have been nearly so interesting as seeing the lions fed at the Zoo, and took much longer. "Y^e Arch Dutches sat down at a square Table by herself, her Ld Chamberlain stood at one end, one of her Ladies behind her, one over against her, and some at y^e other end, while y^e others handed y^e Dishes brought by y^e gentlemen to and from y^e table." They had no sinecure, for he goes on to say that "there was 40 Dishes of Meat etc., and 46 more of Desert." Truly, one must suffer to be great. Sancho Panza naively remarked that he preferred eating when no one was looking on, and there are few who could enjoy eating under such conditions as those of the archduchess.

We are told that she was "a Lusty Woman, not tall, upwards of 60 and hard-favored. About half her Ladies were Lusty, Handsome women, *not painted*." He remarks elsewhere that the "Ladies in Citties dress as in Paris, but don't paint so red."

He only saw one woman ride on horse-back, and of her he says "she rode astrid as y^e Men do." Evidently she was of the strong-minded persuasion, and if alive now would certainly wear divided skirts.

The peasants in the villages struck him as being very poor in France. "No glass windows to their cottages, and some go barefoot, and some have wooden shoes. Y^e women in all these Parts do most of y^e servile Work. They work like Horses, and y^e Men walk about with their Hands in their Pockets." When in Holland, he observes: "From Elberfeld hither I have seen no Crucifixes, Madonnas, or Beggars. One may easily discern y^e difference between this Country where Trade, Liberty, and Property flourish, and y^e melancholy Condition of y^e others where Popery and Arbitrary Power prevail, for there y^e Poverty and necessitous Condition of y^e People and their Houses is very manifest."

He gives his countrymen a better character for sociability than is commonly given them by travellers; he says: "They are chiefly English that resort to Spa, who are very sociable and visit one another

although they never see one another before, but their Method is not to Eat and Drink anything, only to Talk." Of the Germans, he says: "Their Custom is to Eat and Drink all ye Afternoon. They are great Eaters generally." He himself does not seem altogether to have lagged behind in that respect, for he tells us of his going to dine at a German house where was "a Handsome Collation of Crawfish. Everything very good, especially ye Rhenish wine of 1725. They say it will keep 100 years or longer. *Eat and Drank all ye Afternoon and were very merry.*"

The conscription in Prussia appears to have been remorseless in those days, for at Emmerick he writes: "The woman where we lodged told us her two Sons of 8 and 10 years old were Enlisted in ye King of Prussia's Service. The Officer takes their Names in his Book and ties a bit of Black Crape round their necks" — a gloomy proceeding, well suited to the occasion.

When we remember that this was written before Frederick the Great or Maria Theresa had come to their thrones it takes us back indeed a long time in the history of events. Marriages at the Fleet were still legal when these words were written. The penal laws against witches had only just been repealed. The tulip mania was at its height, and men were giving for tulips the same fabulous sums which in the present day their descendants lavish on orchids. A whole generation had yet to be born and to pass away before an umbrella was seen in England and described in dictionaries as "a portable Pent house to carry in a person's hand to screen him from violent rain or heat." It is instructive to find that so trifling an innovation as an umbrella required its early martyrs; the bold spirits who first ventured to use one were annoyed and mobbed, the conservative Britons calling out "Frenchman! why don't you call a coach?"

The substitutes for an umbrella in the times when our diarist lived were cloaks and coaches, and in Flanders he remarked that "ye men are fond of Cloaks, especially purple, and don't care to stir without."

At Rotterdam he dined at "Ye Black Dogg and Ham," a singular sign. The Hague seemed to him "the finest and pleasantest village in Holland;" there he "lay at ye Signe of ye Blew Horse," and he makes the curious note that he "would have had a Goose for Supper, but there is none in ye Country." Sauce Hollandaise

therefore, it is obvious, was never intended to be sauce for the goose.

At Haarlem he writes: "I see ye women go to Church with a Bible under one Arm and a Dutch Stove in ye other Hand, and in ye Church I see above 100 Stoves." No wonder they needed their stoves, for he noticed that "they walk in Slippers which do but just come over their Toes." Think of that and pity them, ye Balmoral-clad maidens of Britain.

From Holland our diarist took ship again for England, and arrived without misadventure the next day at Harwich, where we will take leave of him.

E. A. K.

From The Nineteenth Century.
GARDENS.

THE present season may seem foreign to the consideration of the subject of this paper, but it is when the army is lying in winter quarters that plans for the summer's campaign may best be laid.

By unravelling the mysteries of physical law and compelling inanimate objects to unfold the secrets of their origin and development, science has contributed to the significance and even to the romance of natural scenery. A beautiful landscape speaks two languages to one who has learned the elements of geology; wayside weeds are more than merely foreground garniture in the eyes of one instructed in botany; the bleak moor, the muddy estuary, the gusty hilltop, the forbidding morass — each has its store of interest for the instructed eye; there is hardly an acre of the earth's surface that refuses a harvest to knowledge.

But it must also be confessed that while with one hand science draws the veil aside from truth, with the other she ruthlessly casts down many pretty images of the false gods, before which crowds of worshippers have bent the knee. Over no kind of created things has there been thrown such a network of poetic imagery and sentiment as over flowers; so much so that the good old word "posy," now elbowd out of English speech by the foreign "bouquet," is the very same as "poesy," as if flowers were indeed but a visible form of verse. They appeal so directly to our sense of beauty that it is a common thing to apply intensive language to them. Even botanists, usually grave and staid as becomes men of science, yielding to enthusiasm, ransack the dic-

tionary for names descriptive of the graces of different species, and unscientific folk see nothing but fitness in such superlatives as *elegantissima*, *formosissima*, *spectabilis*, *eximia*, and the like. But how dry and emotionless is the language used to describe some of the loveliest flowers! It is hard not to feel indignant when a graceful plant, like our native gladwyn, or wood iris, with delicate lavender blossoms and stars of bright orange berries, is ticketed with the ugly name *Iris fœtidissima*, the stinking flag, for no other reason than because its shining blades, when bruised, exhale the odor of cold beef.

Often as Perdita's exquisite catalogue has been repeated, it is difficult to resist quoting from it:—

O Proserpina

For the flowers now, that, frightened, thou let'st fall

From Dis's wagon! daffodils

That come before the swallows dare, and take
The winds of March with beauty; violets,
dim,

But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes

Or Cytherea's breath; pale primroses,

That die unmarried, ere they can behold

Bright Phœbus in his strength, a malady

Most incident to maids; bold oxlips, and

The crown-imperial, lilies of all kinds,

The flower-de-luce being one.

Compare with this the sapless descriptions in botanical books. Bentham describes the daffodil as a "single, large, scentless yellow flower;" the charms of the violet are summarized coldly as "flowers nodding, of the bluish-violet color named after them, or white, more or less scented;" while the primrose is dismissed with the comment that its "corolla is usually yellow or straw-colored." So, when the same authority tells us that the blossoms of the sweet-briar are "pink, usually solitary," his language hardly conveys so vivid an impression of the flower as that contained in Tasso's glowing lines:—

Deh mira, egli cantò, spuntar la rosa

Dal verde suo modesta e verginella,

Che mezzo aperta ancora e mezzo ascosa,

Quanto si mostra men, tanto è più bella.*

But the poets are prone to push matters far further than this. Not content with truthful description, they have invested flowers with a fanciful symbolism, and often go so far as to enlist them in sympathy with human mood and passion.

* Mark ye (he sings) in modest maiden guise
The red rose peeping from her leafy nest;
Half opening, now, half closed, the jewel lies,
More bright her beauty seems the more repress.
(Bayley's Translation.)

The slender acacia would not shake

One long milk-bloom on the tree;

The white lake-blossom fell into the lake

As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;

But the rose was awake all night for your sake,

Knowing your promise to me;

The lilies and roses were all awake,

They sighed for the dawn and thee.

There has fallen a splendid tear

From the passion-flower at the gate,

She is coming, my love, my dear;

She is coming, my life, my fate;

The red rose cries, "She is near, she is near;"

And the white rose weeps, "She is late;"

The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear;"

And the lily whispers, "I wait."

One is lulled by the beauty of such lines to forget the false sentiment in them, the "pathetic fallacy" against which Mr. Ruskin long ago uttered a warning; but it is false, all the same, as false as Perdita's treatment is true.* Nothing is more clear than the utter indifference of nature to human joy or sorrow; the daffodils are much concerned with the March winds, but with the sighs or smiles of men and women—not at all; the roses, the larkspurs, and the lilies would have reflected precisely the same rays, poured the same incense, held their fair heads at the same angle, whether Maud kept tryst or broke her promise to come. It is, in truth, not poetic insight, but intense egoism that makes a man suppose that trees and flowers, seas and skies are in sympathy with his feelings, and it is an impertinence even to pretend that they can be influenced by human vicissitude. To do so is as much an error against right art as to import supernatural agency into romance, and is as far astray from the genuine aim of literature as astrology differs from astronomy.

But, on the other hand, one cannot help being delighted when scientific method and cold-blooded analysis break down, swept away before the imperious sway of beauty, and Linnæus bursts into tears on beholding for the first time an English common covered with gorse in bloom. That great marshal of the host of green things, whose clear-sighted genius first prevailed to rally and array the multitudinous forms examined and described by his predecessors into manageable genera and species, has left behind him, in addition to the imperishable monument of the Linnæan system, a touching proof of his

* [Not false *art*, surely, but very right *art*, to put false *sentiment*, as Tennyson dramatically does here, into the mouth of a morbid egoist on the brink of insanity.—Ed.]

softer feelings for the objects of his study. It was not with the gorgeous flora of the tropics, nor with the towering pines of Scandinavian forests, that he sought to link his name; but, choosing a fragile, trailing herb which rears its tiny pink bells not more than two or three inches above the moss and fallen fir-needles in northern woods, he gave it the name it still bears, *Linnaea borealis*. This lovely plant he made his badge; it forms the device on his bookplate, with the tender motto, *Tantus amor florum* — "So deep my love for flowers."

It is possible that the lovers of flowers in Linnæus's day may have thought him a tiresome pedant for arranging their favorites in artificial groups and genera, and thought his system an unnecessary interference with the beautiful art of gardening; but how much more seriously the latest results of botanical science threaten the whole significance of flowers! In childhood, in love, in war, in politics, in feasts, and in mournings, in every kind of ceremony, parable, and poetry, flowers have been the fittest emblems ever since the world began. To some they seem to have been created for the joy of man, to others for the glory of God; but now we are told to believe that every use to which they have been put by human beings has been an interference with their real purpose, and that every meaning that has been discerned in them is utterly wide of their true function. Not to fill man's heart with joy and gratitude for a beautiful creation, nor yet to raise his spirit in adoration to the Creator, were those lovely petals spread in myriad forms and hues and all their alchemy of odor devised, but solely to attract winged and creeping things which, passing from corolla to corolla, should carry the virtues of one plant to another, and secure cross-fertilization! We are told of islands in the South Pacific where, as yet, no winged insect has ever come, and there the plants have no gay flowers or attractive odors, and the pollen of one has to wait till a favoring breeze wafts it to the expectant stigma of another.

All this may seem to work sad havoc with our love for flowers, which is, nevertheless, so universal that it will take generations of materialism to uproot it.

Were proof wanted of how closely flowers are interwoven with the affections of civilized man, it would only be necessary to cite the evidence of every house in Europe which is worthy of being called a home, from that of the wealthy landowner,

who spends many thousands a year on his flower-beds and orchid-houses, to the artisan's in a back street with its geranium-pots in the window, or the Alpine shepherd's, with a box of luxuriant carnations on the sill. Nay, strongest proof of all, does not the British Parliament, that sifts every pound voted each year in Committee of Supply with ferocious scrutiny and suspicion of extravagance, allow huge sums to be spent on the beautifying of London parks? And to descend to personalities, it is no unfamiliar sight to behold a relentless Radical economist betraying his carnal affinities by the display of an orchid's "phanerogamous inflorescence" in his button-hole.

Seeing, then, that flower-gardens are sources of pleasure, and that much money is spent on them annually, it is worth the inquiry whether they are made to yield all the pleasure that might be had from them, and whether the money, as a rule, is well spent. It would be strange if this turned out to be the case, seeing that a very small proportion of those who own gardens care to learn anything about their culture, or know anything about flowers except their general effect.

In this country the art of gardening has been made to encounter a serious disadvantage arising out of the way well-to-do people have chosen to arrange their seasons; for, whereas nature has provided that by far the larger number of plants shall put forth their blossoms in spring and early summer, that is precisely the season which "society" has perversely ordained shall be spent in town. Further, the hues of spring and summer flowers being much purer and brighter than those of late summer and autumn, gardeners have been obliged, in order to give satisfaction to their employers, to have recourse to plants from those regions where spring corresponds to our autumn. This complicates matters immensely; it is much easier to obtain good effects having the seasons on one's own side than when they are contrary, but it is a difficulty that has been very creditably overcome in big establishments. Unfortunately, in order to do so, it was necessary to clear the ground of plants that had given pleasure to our grandmothers and to their grandmothers before them; borders which, year by year, for generations, had glowed with the same jewellery of crocus, hepatica, narcissus, iris, lilies, and summer roses, had now to be cleared, and their contents, rich with all fond association, flung on the waste-heap, or, at best, banished to the kitchen-

garden, to make way for glaring scarlet, blue, and yellow of geranium, lobelia, and calceolaria. I well remember, some twenty years ago, making prize of a barrow-load of roots of the white Madonna lily which had been thrown on the rubbish-heap of a villa garden in a small seaport town. They were planted in my borders, which they beautify to this day.

And the mischief did not stop with big fashionable gardens. People of far humbler means — even those who lived most of, or all, the year in their country homes — were induced to ape the prevailing mode, and chose, or were persuaded by their gardeners to be content with, brown, barren beds for nine months in the year, provided a proper blaze could be prepared for the autumn. The scheme of gardening that could only be carried out successfully on a great scale was attempted in cottage and villa gardens, with deplorable results. Even where space and means were not wanting, the new materials were infinitely more hazardous than the old. To deal with plants chosen because they produce a profuse mass of strong color requires a trained eye such as few gardeners can be expected to possess; the old-fashioned permanent borders might be trusted to throw up such a wealth of foliage and variety of form as to soften crude contrasts and disguise indiscreet juxtaposition; their general effect was a bank of various verdure, lit up by splashes and sparkles of bright or subdued color; but the new system aimed at unmitigated breadths of intense hue, disposed in bands, concentric circles or other uncompromising forms — in short, as unlike nature and as like upholstery as might be. The effect was, and is still, often excruciating; people sensitive to the beauty of nature shunned the garden with its shadeless walks and fiery parterres, seeking in woodland paths that reposeful charm and those soothing scents which fashion had banished beyond the pale.

So universal was the submission to the new decree that the traditional English flower-garden almost ceased to exist, except about some quiet farmhouses in the south, and a few, very few, old Scottish mansions. The links in the long chain from the days of Queen Elizabeth and Shakespeare were severed. Spenser himself could not have described the modern garden as

Here and there with pleasant arbors pight,
And shady seats, and sundry flow'ring bankes;
To sit and rest the walker's wearie shankes;

and it would have been the very last place of resort for him of whom he wrote: —

To the gay gardens his unstaide desire
Him wholly carried, to refresh his sprights;
There lavish Nature in her best attire
Poures forth sweet odors and alluring sights;
And Art, with her contending, doth aspire
To excell the naturall with made delights;
And all that faire or pleasant may be found,
In riotous excesse doth there abound.

For everything that interfered with the general view of the beds was cleared away, if timely intercession were not at hand. Some years ago there stood in the flower-garden of Bemersyde, near Dryburgh, four immense hollies clipped into dense domes of green. One of these was said to be the largest holly in Scotland, which was very likely true, for of the two that remain, one is the largest I ever beheld, either in Scotland or elsewhere. These four stood in a square on the flat pleasaunce in front of the fine old Border tower, till one evil day, it is said, it occurred to the agent who managed the property to lay out the ground in the fashionable style, and because two of these fine trees infringed on the symmetry of the proposed parterre, he ordered them to be cut down. O Priapus and Pomona! O Hamadryads and Fauns! where were ye that day, that ye did not hunt the wretched man into the deepest pool in the Tweed, rather than such cruel havoc should be wrought?

The result of this and other acts of violence was an intolerable monotony. Go into one garden after another, you would come on the same Mrs. Pollock geranium, the same ageratums, lobelias, and calceolarias named after various members of the plutocracy, the identical cerastium and colored beet. The only variety was in the pattern in which they were disposed.

For five-and-twenty or thirty years this tyranny endured. Everybody conformed to it, but nobody enjoyed the results very much, except the experts, who vied with each other who could produce the most fiery conflagration in autumn. People were dissatisfied, they did not know why, though the reason was not difficult to divine, for form, scent, and refined color had been exchanged for uniformity and glare; association had been broken, and it was impossible to feel for bedding-out plants any of the affection inspired by the old favorites that held the same places in a border for more than a century, and faithfully told the changing seasons by their growth, blossom, and decay.

Gradually a reaction set in. Lord Bea-

consfield, the anniversary of whose death has become so strangely associated with the primrose, probably knew as much and as little about horticulture as the emperor of Morocco, but he was exceedingly sensitive to popular feeling, even in small matters, and gave indication in "Lothair" of what was coming. Corisande's garden (though it might have puzzled the author to define a "gilliflower") was described with some minuteness on a Shakespearean model. People were captivated with the idea suggested; it reminded them of what gardens had been when they were children, and presently an inquiry began for long-neglected herbaceous plants. Mr. William Robinson became the energetic pioneer of the movement; his "Alpine Flowers for English Gardens," "Hardy Plants and How to Grow Them," "The Wild Garden," and other works, were written with admirable skill and taste, and showed complete practical knowledge. They met with so much success, and did so much to stimulate the revolt against "bedding-out" that, just twenty years ago, he was encouraged to start a weekly journal, which continues, as it began, an effective advocacy of Perdita's flowers and their like, and a protest against the exclusive or general use of tender flowers. The true keynote is struck in the motto selected by Mr. Robinson for his paper, the *Garden*:

This is an Art
Which does mend Nature; changes it rather,
but
The Art itself is Nature.

The reform has been general; long-forgotten favorites have been hunted up from such places as they had been suffered to linger in, and already English gardens are throwing off that distressing similarity to one another which threatened to make their old name of "pleasaunce" a term of bitter irony. One feature they must always have in common, though it is capable of being disposed in a thousand different ways, namely, green turf. Thanks to our benignant skies, the "moist, bird-haunted English lawn" is never likely to suffer permanently from any passing freak of fashion, and with liberal breadths of closely shaven grass no piece of ground can be other than beautiful; as Bacon truly observed, "Nothing is more pleasant to the eye, than green grass kept finely shorn."

There was one dominant feature in Elizabethan gardening which it were not well to see universally revived, and that is

the art of the topiarist, by which almost every tree and shrub that would suffer the shears was clipped into fantastic similitude of men, birds, beasts, castles, and other figures. The effect when this practice was as universal as bedding-out was a dozen years ago must have been equally monotonous. Nevertheless, such specimens of this treatment as have survived the lapse of centuries will, it is hoped, be jealously guarded, for, apart from their antiquarian interest, and the romantic association with which they are invested, they afford a grateful excitement to the eye accustomed to tamer and more uniform arrangement. Not many such remain; indeed, Lord Stanhope remarks, in his "History of England," that

throughout the whole of England there remains, perhaps, scarcely more than one private garden presenting in all its parts an entire and true sample of the old designs; this is at the fine old seat of Levens, near Kendal. There, along a wide extent of terraced walks and walls, eagles of holly, and peacocks of yew still find, with each returning summer, their wings clipped and talons pared. There, a stately remnant of the old *promenoirs*—such as the Frenchmen taught our fathers, rather, I would say, to build than to plant—along which, in days of old, stalked the gentlemen with periwigs and swords, the ladies in hoops and furbelows, may still to this day be seen.

So great is the fascination of the garden at Levens, where flowers seem brighter and more luxuriant than in any nineteenth-century borders, by contrast with the formal, sombre yews and the sad, grey walls of the old mansion-house, that it is strange that no attempt has already been made to revive the forgotten topiary art. Yet one shudders to think of the result should it ever become the fashion. Stripped of the glamour of eld, tortured shrubs and shorn trees are not objects in which the eye finds repose; the object should be to assist and control nature, not to deform or travesty her. Yet there is one feature in the Elizabethan garden which should find a place in the Victorian more commonly than it does—namely, the close or pleached alley. It gives the seclusion which is of the essence of a garden, and how the artists of romance, from Boccaccio and Marguerite of Navarre onwards, love to loiter in these leafy corridors!

It is no easy task to lay out or alter a garden. People with taste have not served apprenticeship to the craft; they have a general idea of the effect desired, but they don't know the means required to produce

it; on the other hand, gardeners who have the skill and understand the materials rarely have had opportunities of cultivating taste. More than half the happy effects come by chance. Moreover, the newly awakened zeal for hardy plants is sometimes disappointing in its results. Spring flowers, most charming of all, are too often arranged to give a dotty effect; they blaze from the brown earth with no friendly foliage to lend breadth to the arrangement. In summer, the borders are apt to look rank and weedy, the weaker species struggling for existence with robust neighbors; and in autumn, unless it is skilfully prepared for, they are apt to be dull and flowerless. "Oh, I wish you had seen the garden a month ago; it *was* in beauty then, but the things have gone over now!" That is precisely where the gardener's art is wanted to assist nature, and is quite capable of doing so with the wealth of material at his disposal. Perennial borders should never "go over," not even in winter, when they are generally given over to despair. There should always be *some* part of the garden, no matter what the season, where things are at their best. Yet there is a family of plants, too much neglected, the peculiar property of which is to bridge the gulf between the embers of October and the first sparkles of February. This family is the Hellebore, of which the Christmas rose is a lovely and well-known member. The first to flower is *H. niger maximus*, which opens its great bells, of the color of apple-blossom, in the first days of November, and thenceforward — blow high, blow low, come sleet or snow or frost or rain — will maintain great wreaths of bloom till well on in January. Then the other varieties of *H. niger*, of which there are at least a dozen, take up the running and keep things gay till the latter kinds *H. abchasicus*, *antiquorum*, *orientalis*, and others produce their pink, purple, or white clusters. By this time we are well into the months of snowdrop, crocus, winter aconite, and hepatica, and the dead months have slipped away. But on the Hellebore need not be thrown all the work; there is the fragrant coltsfoot (*Tussilago fragrans*) blooming all the time, with a strong scent exactly like heliotrope, and as hardy as its plebeian relative of the roadsides; the winter cherry (*Physalis Alkekengi*), with the constitution of a burdock, hung with quaint orange-bladders from Michaelmas to Christmas; there are also certain shrubs, such as the witch hazel (*Hamamelis arborea* and *virginica*), with strange

festoons of yellow and crimson stars on leafless twigs, and the winter jasmine (*Jasminum nudiflorum*), a very Mark Tapley among herbs, that pour out in blossom at that season the virtue stored in them by summer suns.

People with well-stored conservatories and stoves will think rightly of this garniture of winter beds, liable any day to be buried overhead in snow; but without in the least undervaluing the luxury of glass houses, one may be allowed to claim a special charm in the humble out-of-door flowers that re-appear year after year in the same place, only asking to be let alone. Some of these lowly plants are of extraordinary longevity; it is impossible to guess the age of some clumps of iris, sweet william, or scarlet lychnis, but there is no apparent reason why they should not outlive the oak, possessed as they are of perpetual power of renewing themselves.

One cannot be ungrateful for the skill which, by an elaborate system of forcing, supplies us with spring and summer flowers in mid-winter, and makes London flower-shops as attractive at Yuletide as at Whitsuntide. Still, there is a good deal of sense in Biron's speech in "Love's Labor's Lost:" —

Why should I joy in any abortive mirth?
At Christmas I no more desire a rose
Than wish for snow in May's new-fangled
mirth,
But like of each thing that in season grows.

No doubt our enjoyment of spring and summer flowers would be keener if we were not accustomed to have lilies-of-the-valley at the new year and carnations at Candlemas.

People with knowledge of and liking for hardy plants are apt to give the herbaceous garden too much the character of a botanical collection. They have not the resolution to exclude species of inferior beauty; but, with the wealth of all the ends of the earth to choose from, resolute discretion is necessary if the garden is to be one worthy of the name.

If a contrast were sought to the formal style of gardening of the seventeenth century, so well exemplified in the beautiful pleasance at Levens above referred to, one more complete could not be found than in a garden of equal merit, though on a totally different plan, in Mr. George Wilson's grounds at Oakwood, near Weybridge. The owner and maker of this paradise may best be described as a decorative botanist; deeply versed in all plant-

lore, yet, with a constant eye to what consists with beauty, he has enclosed several acres on the slope and crest of a hill, including a wood at the foot and a piece of water. Here he has assembled a vast collection of plants, carefully arranged, but with all trace of design studiously concealed. A lady lately visiting it expressed the effect in a single sentence: "I hardly know," she said, "what this place should be called; it is not a garden, it is a place where plants from all parts of the world grow wild."

Call this field of beauty what you will — garden or wilderness — and visit it at what season you may, you will be penetrated with its charm; whether in April, when the hillside is flashing with rivulets and pools of pure hues from squills, wind-flowers, daffodils, gentians, sweet alisons; or in early summer, when many kinds of iris unfold their gorgeous petals round the lake in floods of purple, blue, and gold; or in autumn, when the troops of gold-rayed lilies rise ghostlike in the copse, and African *tritomas* hold flaming torches along the paths, Mr. Wilson has shown how royally English soil and climate will repay care and judgment with boundless wealth of blossom.

One great evil to be avoided in the design and contents of a garden is sameness. There is a phrase that constantly recurs in horticultural journals when some plant is being commended: "No garden should be without it." Unfortunately, gardeners are too often content to grow the same flowers as their neighbors; are, indeed, dissatisfied unless they have the same species. Some years ago it struck somebody that the single dahlia was a more beautiful flower than the varieties hitherto approved, upon which great pains and much skill had been expended to get them as like ribbon rosettes and as little like natural flowers as possible. No sooner was the idea acted on than single dahlias became the rage, and now it is the rarest thing to go into any garden without seeing these plants, really of none but indifferent merit, sprawling over the borders. They were pleasing as a novel feature, but nobody gets much enjoyment out of them now; they perish with the first frost, and any scent they possess is disagreeable.

We have a hundred species to choose from now for every one that eighteenth-century nurserymen could supply. In China, Japan, the Himalayas, Siberia, Australasia, North and South America, in every mountain range and island of the sea, collectors have vied with each other

in securing new plants, and each year many are added to the list of those which adapt themselves to our climate. It is about twenty years since the whorled primrose of Japan was introduced, and people willingly paid 30s. apiece for such a noble acquisition. Now it may be seen sowing itself in the borders with the freedom of an English "paigle."*

Fraxinus in sylvis pulcherrima, pinus in hortis,

was Virgil's precept, and the pine he recommended for decking a garden was the stone pine of the Mediterranean. How vastly greater is the variety of conifers from which we may choose, from the lovely *Picea nobilis* of Colorado, to the fantastic *Salisburia*, the Gingko of Japan, less like a fir than a huge maidenhair fern. It is only necessary to remember that fifty years ago rhododendrons were hardly known, to realize how far we excel our grandfathers in wealth of material.

It is provoking to see people at the pains to cultivate and decorate their ground, yet often neglecting to bring out the special characteristics of their soil and climate. Zones of mean temperature run in these islands much more with degrees of longitude than of latitude. In Cornwall, Argyllshire, and Galway, shrubs and humbler plants flourish luxuriantly which would perish in a single winter in Oxfordshire or Surrey. Yet in the benign west one is just as apt to find the walls monopolized by plants adapted for the London climate as with the myrtles, lemon verbenas, Edwardsia, and other choice things that might both surprise and delight the visitor. Any one who has driven across the desolate upland lying between Clifden and Letterfrack, in Galway, will surely remember with pleasure the miles of hedges of crimson fuchsia with which Mr. Mitchell Henry has had the taste to array the high-road near his place, Kylemore. Of course it is right to give individual preference for certain flowers; there is no reason why, if the lord of the soil loves the roses above other flowers, he should think himself bound to sacrifice them to camellias, in order to show the mildness of his climate; camellias he should have where they flourish (as every one will agree who has seen the fairy-like display they make in the open air at East Lytchett, in Dorsetshire), because they will distinguish his garden from ninety-nine hundredths of others; but he should also take the full of his climatic

* *Paigle* is the old English name for the cowslip.

advantage in behalf of his favorite flower. Very few persons have ever seen the single white Macartney rose (*Rosa bracteata*), because, being somewhat tender, it will not reward culture in Midland or eastern districts; but there is rare beauty in its thick, ivory-like petals, clustered golden anthers, and glossy foliage. I well remember the impression it made on first seeing it on the wall of the boathouse at Port Eliot, in Cornwall — I rested not till I had procured it, though it was years before I found any nurseryman who kept it in stock; and it may be useful to record that it proves quite at home on the west coast of Scotland, where a dozen plants survived uninjured the rigors of the memorable winter of 1890-91.

But the westward influence is not enough for some roses, such as the Banksian, which is patient of a very low winter temperature, provided it gets a more liberal summer sun than can be had north of the Trent. Even in the south it is sometimes so ignorantly and harshly dealt with by the pruner's knife, that its owner looks in vain for the profuse drift of snowy or sulphur-hued blossom that rewards the *laissez-faire* treatment of this rose.

This advantage the denizens of old English gardens possess over recent importations, that names hallowed by time and endeared by association have been bestowed upon them; for, Juliet's opinion notwithstanding, there *is* much in a name, and the rose would not have been such a favorite with the poets if it had been christened turnip. A distinct sensation of freshness, as of early summer mornings, is produced by simply repeating some of the old, flower names, which Mr. Prior has arranged so handily in his "Popular Names of British Plants." * The memory of childhood spent in the country is fondly stirred by the familiar names eglantine, lad's-love, fair-maids-of-France, goldilocks, lady's-smock, herb-paris (also called herb-truelove), gold-of-pleasure, etc. Many of them have a distinct significance; Gerarde affirms that bachelor's-buttons (a double white ranunculus) was so called from the similitude of the buds "to the jagged cloathe buttons, antiently worne in this kingdom," while another authority attributes the name to "a habit of country fellows to carry them in their pockets to divine their success with their sweet-hearts." Then the celandine owes its name to the most irrational tradition ever conceived, yet one that received the sanc-

tion of such hard heads as Aristotle's and Pliny's, and has been repeated unhesitatingly by countless writers on botany and natural history. The name is from the Greek *χελιδών*, a swallow, "not," as Gerarde is at pains to warn his readers, "because it first springeth at the coming in of the swallowes, or dieth when they go away, for, as we have saide, it may be founde all the yeare, but because some holde opinion, that with this herbe the dams restore sight to their young ones, when their eies be put out." The flower-de-luce, generally written fleur-de-lis, or lys, as if the last syllable had to do with a lily, is really *fleur-de-Louis*, and was the cognizance of royal France ever since it was chosen as his badge by Louis the Seventh, "qui chargea l'écu de France de fleurs-de-lis sans nombre."

But of all flowers of the garden, none has had so many fanciful names bestowed upon it as the pansy. *pensieri menuti*, idle thoughts, as the Italians call it.

The Pansy next, which English maids

Call Heart's-ease — innocent translation —
As if each thought that springs and fades
Were but a source of jubilation.

The pretty name heart's-ease does not, indeed, belong by right to the pansy, but was applied to designate the wall-flower, from its real or supposed virtue as a cordial, and the pansy itself has at various times and in different countries been known as herb trinity (from its three colors), love-and-idle, kiss-me-ere-I-rise, jump-up-and-kiss-me, three-faces-under-a-hood.

A place might surely be found oftener in the pleasure-ground for certain plants generally relegated to the herb garden, such as rue, lavender, and rosemary. Their beauty, certainly, is of a lowly order, but there hangs about them such a mist of popular lore that they bring to mind a time before these thorny days of social science, county councils, and school boards — a time to return to which, were the choice given us, it might be wise to hesitate, yet a time when our country was known among the nations as "Merrie England," when the poor were not so poor, and the rich were not so rich, and no one vexed his soul by asking if life was worth living. The rue, Shakespeare's herb of grace, was supposed to flourish stronger if stolen from a neighbor's garden. Lavender, though strangely enough omitted by Bacon from his list of sweet-smelling plants, is endeared to us by a thousand proofs of the esteem our forefathers had for it; such as Isaac Walton's

* London: Frederick Norgate, 1879.

description of "an honest ale-house, where we shall find a cleanly room, lavender in the windows, and twenty ballads stuck against the wall, and my hostess, I may tell you, is both cleanly and handsome and civil." Rosemary —

Trim rosmarin that whilom crowned
The daintiest garden of the proudest peer —
also called guardrobe from its use as a preservative of clothes, may now be looked for in vain in the gardens of most peers, though it deserves a better fate, were it only in memory of gentle Sir Thomas More. "As for rosmarine," he wrote, "I lett it run alle over my garden walls, not onlie because my bees love it, but because 'tis the herb sacred to remembrance, and therefore to friendship; whence a sprig of it hath a dumb language that maketh it the chosen emblem at our funeral wakes and in our buriall grounds." It may sometimes still be seen so used, being laid upon coffins, especially in the northern counties. But a more equivocal significance is also attributed to it, with which some may be inclined to connect its disappearance from modern borders; it is alleged that it only flourishes where the mistress rules, or at least has a fair share in ruling, the household.

Since the days of chaste Lucrece,

Their silent war of lilies and of roses,
Which Tarquin viewed in her fair face's field,
has gone on without intermission, though far from silently. Every one admits that lilies and roses excel all other flowers, but the controversy as to which is entitled to pre-eminence has never yet been, and never will be, settled. It is best avoided by having plenty of both, and truly no garden is worth a visit that is not well furnished with them. Alexander Montgomery had made up his mind about it when he penned the verse: —

I love the lily as the first of flowers

Whose stately stalk so straight up is and
stay [stiff],

In whom th' lave [the rest], ay lowly louts
and cowers

As bound so brave a beauty to obey.

But another Scottish poet, Dunbar, had already, a hundred years before Montgomery, given equally emphatic verdict for the rose: —

Nor hold none other flower in sic dainty
As the fresh rose of color red and white,
For if thou dost, hurt is thine honesty,

Considering that so flower is no perfitte,
So full of virtue, pleaseance and delight,
So full of blissful angelic beauty,
Imperial birth, honor, and dignity.

On the whole, Queen Rose commands a wider allegiance than Queen Lily, in our own country at least, where she is not only the flower assigned by heralds as the emblem of England, but is associated with the bloody strife between the houses of York and Lancaster — the Wars of the Roses — and the white rose is specially dear to Jacobites as being the badge of the ill-starred house of Stuart; while the lily was the chivalrous emblem of England's ancient rival — France.

The perfection and profusion of what are known as "hybrid perpetuals," combined with the desire for autumn blooms, have prevailed to throw into the background some lovely summer roses, such as still make paradise of cottage-gardens in June. Of such may be named the old double white (*Rosa alba*), the York and Lancaster, sireaked with red and white; the Austrian copper, with single flowers of intense fiery orange, much rarer than the same species with sulphur-colored petals; and the celestial blush, of matchless shell-pink, in exquisite harmony with its glaucous foliage.

Mr. Ellacombe, in his pleasant volume, "The Plant-lore and Garden-lore of Shakespeare," * quotes a bit of rose-lore gravely told in the "Voiage and Travaile" of Sir John Mandeville: —

At Bethelheim is the Felde *Floridus*, that is to seyne, the *Feld florished*; for als moche as a fayre mayden was blamed with wrong and sclaudered, for whiche cause sche was demed to the Dethe, and to be brent in that place, to the whiche she was ladd; and as the Fyre began to brent about hire, sche made hire preyers to oure Lord, that als wissely as sche was not gilty of that Synne, that He wolde helpe hire and make it to be known to alle men, of his mercyfulle grace. And when sche hadde thus seyde, sche entered into the Fuyr: and anon was the Fuyr quenched and oute; and the Brondes that weren brennyng becomen red Roseres, and the Brondes that weren not kyndled becomen white Roseres. And these weren the first Roseres and Roses, both white and rede, that evere any man saughe.

Before passing from the rose, it may be permitted to allude to a term often used by Shakespeare but almost equally often misunderstood by his readers. The "canker" was the common name for the dog-rose, and is so intended in such passages as

So put down Richard, that sweet lovely rose,
And plant this thorn, this canker Bolingbroke.

Or again, in the "Sonnets": —

* London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., 1884.

The canker-blooms have full as deep a dye
As the perfumed tincture of the rose.

But when Titania speaks of "killing cankers in the musk-rose buds," or the poet sings in the "Sonnets" that "loathsome canker lives in sweetest bud," the reference is to a parasitic worm.

Since the days when Montgomery championed the cause of the lily, the ranks of that fair flower in our own country have been strengthened by a vast reinforcement from foreign climes. The giant lily (*Lilium giganteum* or *cordifolium*) is as hardy as the hemlock, and soars to the height of eight or ten feet under favorable circumstances; the Isabella lily (*L. testaceum*), of hybrid origin, almost equals it in stature, and is distinguished from all others by its delicate apricot hue; while of *Lilium auratum*, the gold-rayed lily of Japan, the most gorgeous plant that will endure our trying climate, it is worth recording that the variety *platyphyllum* is by far the finest and the most permanent, coming up year after year in the same spot, whereas the other varieties generally perish in the second or third season.

Gardeners love to prose about their pursuit; 'tis such a seductive hobby, and ambles along so easily that it were easy to strain the reader's patience; so only one other point in the decoration of grounds will be here alluded to. Statuary is seldom used in the decoration of gardens now, yet of all places where it can be seen to advantage it is there. It gives a feeling of repose which is an indispensable quality in garden scenery, and in return receives tranquil attention, which can seldom be bestowed on it in public places. With trees, flowers, fair statues, greensward, and song of birds, what pleasant resting-places the pilgrims of life may make for themselves!

HERBERT MAXWELL.

From The Cornhill Magazine.
THE CANDIDATE.

SENG was forty-five years of age, and one of the most painstaking students of his time of life to be found in Peking.

For the past thirty years he had regularly entered his name in the great civil service examinations which take place throughout the empire. Hard indeed had he striven to qualify himself for the honor of official employment. But he was, alas, by nature rather dull, and year after year

he was unsuccessful. For a while he never got out of the last thousand of the ten or twelve thousand candidates who aspired as he aspired.

Time went on, however, and by the help of the most untiring assiduity he began towards the middle of his life to be regarded as a promising student. If he continued to progress in the same ratio, there was yet some likelihood that ere he was fifty he might meet with his reward.

Seng was the more stimulated to persevere inasmuch as he was not at ease in his home circle. His father was dead. His mother was blind, and of an unamiable disposition. Indeed, she was more than unamiable; by some aberration of heart she began to scoff at her son, and upbraid him for his deficiency of intellect. She also behaved very badly indeed to her daughter-in-law, the student's wife.

Herein Seng appears to have shown some indiscretion. He married a girl with enchanting teeth and eyes, but next to no brains. This was a manifest contravention of the natural law which impels a dull man to seek a clever wife, and an intellectual man a mere doll of a girl for a helpmate. It would have mattered the less—even if it had not been a positive convenience—had not Madame Seng (as we will call the old lady, Seng's mother) become much incapacitated by her blindness. As it was, she desired a daughter-in-law whom she could rely upon to do everything connected with the house, from buying rice to dusting the domestic effigies, as well as to be infinitely patient and long-suffering under the abuse and even blows which she loved to bestow upon subordinates.

Seng's wife, however, was not such a girl. She suited Seng, and Seng suited her, because he was at all times fairly civil towards her. She took the greatest possible care of her teeth, and daily washed her eyes with a celebrated perfumed water warranted to preserve their brightness. For the rest, she was content so she could avoid her mother-in-law's voice and the cane with which latterly, in her old age, the blind woman was often wont to pursue her. Vain was it for Seng, in response to his mother's complaints, to dole forth moral maxims for his wife's improvement. The copy-book phrases were excellently spoken, but they fell on unfertile soil. And, moreover, when Seng perceived through his spectacles how snow-white were his spouse's pretty teeth, and with what an attractive lustre her eyes

sparkled towards him, even he was, more often than not, tempted to caress when he meant to scold.

This sort of thing exasperated the mother-in-law immeasurably. Latterly she became very bitter, and would run amuck about the house with the cane in her hand, beating this way and that, and calling her daughter-in-law many opprobrious names. The girl would stand in an alcove and watch the old woman's proceedings quite calmly, and without either the wish or the thought of taunting her. But when the swish of the cane approached in her direction, she would gently step through the window of the alcove, not forgetting even to bolt it from the outside lest an accident should happen. The old woman would continue her malevolent rushes to and fro until she was exhausted. Then Seng's wife would return, and, with soothing words, try to assuage the poor blind creature's animosity against her; and when she was more than commonly exhausted, she would take her upon her knee as if she were a baby, and rock her until her strength and indignation had recovered themselves.

Such scenes as these became very common in the house. They moved poor Seng to tears more than once, and he might have been heard muttering to himself a string of precepts enjoining the duty of filial love and forbearance under all circumstances. But there can be no doubt all this agitation at home affected his chances at the examinations. His depression was something terrible when the lists had appeared, and he realized that he had gained no ground—or as good as none—during the previous twelve months.

When Seng reached the ripe age of forty his mother died. This was a sad blow to the poor man. Not that he would have been inconsolable for his mother's loss in itself; for he had schooled himself into the assurance that she had long exhausted the pleasures of existence. But, as a matter of fact, with her vanished the means of the household support. It was an iniquitous thing. The old woman, from mere spite, had bequeathed such estate as she had to the heads of a certain pagoda on a hill over against her house. They were to build her a fine tomb, with a south aspect, on another neighboring hill, to keep her memory green for a period.

Never was there such a hard and extraordinary calamity. It was of a kind, too, that smote poor Seng in his tenderest part. His mother had insulted him for-

ever and ever. She had not had confidence in him and his regard for the sacred law which enjoins a son to do all he can for his parents, dead or alive.

Moreover, how was he to know that the same unnatural feeling which had prompted this cruel diversion of the family estate would not perpetuate itself to his detriment in the spiritual world? In other words, the awful thought came to him that his mother's ghostly part would oppose him in his literary efforts, and also do its best to make him completely miserable in all the concerns of his life.

"And this evil," he moaned, "is to come upon one who never failed to kowtow night and morning at your venerable feet, O my mother!"

In the fervor of his grief the poor fellow actually forgot himself so far as to weep, with his head bent on his wife's shoulder, she tenderly stroking his brow the while, and whispering words of comfort about the forthcoming examination.

"You will become a high and mighty official," she said. "I wish to prophesy it."

Hearing this, Seng braced himself, and, with the light of heroic endeavor in his eyes—poor eyes, weakened by his incessant studies—he clasped his wife to his breast, and began an eloquent oration, in which much was said about the priceless value of unwearied application and the virtues that arise in the heart after twenty years of literary exercises.

"I will forget the past. I will be young forever until I succeed, and when these sad hours are gone, we shall look back upon them as salutary aids to that eternal contentment which shall abide with us as the result of a competence!"

Thus, urged by necessity and his own fading ambitions, Seng threw himself into the strife of the examinations with a consuming earnestness. He was never without slips in his hand, and even in his sleep he repeated his phrases without knowing it.

So enthralling grew his passion for print that if, in walking the streets, he saw upon the ground but a morsel of paper with the character upon it, he would fall into a noble passion. Having picked it up, and execrated the careless person who had cast it aside, he would then bear it reverently to the corner of the street, and, with an ejaculatory sentence from Confucius or one of the Five Ancient Classics, deposit it in the receptacle there prepared for such precious litter.

In spite of Seng's labors, however, year

after year went by, with failure ever in their train. The thought of his mother, and the possibility that she was still working mischief for him, often depressed him immeasurably. But he struggled on bravely, and at length made really substantial progress in the lists. A compassionate mandarin employed him in the mean time as a sort of fifth-rate clerk. The wage was ridiculous, but Seng and his wife made it suffice. They trusted to the future to recompense them.

This brings us to Seng's forty-sixth year, which found him in Peking, and a hot favorite for the honors of the examination that was impending. The mandarin in whose service he was had entrusted him with a commission of some delicacy. He was to bribe a superior as astutely as possible for a certain purpose. It was by no means a task to our friend's taste, but he sighed and fulfilled it, so skilfully indeed that he gained the regard of the sinner; and then he turned himself to his slips and moral exercises with the zeal and sprightliness of a boy.

"It shall be this year or never," he said to himself. He said it also to his tutor, who had great confidence in him, and who did not scruple, over innumerable cups of tea, to whisper it abroad that Piseng was as sure of a place this year as man could be.

Now Piseng was our friend's full name, but for brevity's sake he was generally known by the ordinary name of Seng. In the schools, however, he was of course entered in full, and the prefix "Pi" gave him a certain distinction which the multitude of other candidates with names as common as our Smith, Brown, Robinson, Jones, etc., by no means enjoyed.

As the time came on for the great examinations to begin, the influx of students into the imperial city made a perceptible difference in the population of the streets. It also caused proportionate excitement among the students themselves, their kindred, and the various proprietors of the lotteries, who were now to reap their annual harvest of cash and taels from the speculative inhabitants of the city. And this is one of the many odd features of life in the far East, as contrasted with life among ourselves.

In the south of Europe the lotteries are concerned with inanimate numbers. You invest your money on these in a series, and thus you lose it—much more often than not. With us horse-racing seems on a par with the lotteries. But the exalted Chinaman is not content with such meth-

ods of profit and loss. At the time of the great examination he backs candidates in a series, even as the Italian with a spare half-franc backs the numbers his superstition and the latest popular dream-book urge him to favor with his suffrages.

And so it happened that, as the fame of Seng's indefatigable industry and more than usually strenuous efforts at his studies became noised abroad in the parlors of professors and the back streets of Peking, the public began to fancy him as a winning card.

Great, then, was the run upon the series in which the name of Piseng appeared.

Word of this was of course soon brought to our friend, who abode with his wife in a small house in a mean part of the city.

"They shall not be disappointed," said Seng, with ill-concealed elation. "There are virtues of different kinds, but of these the pre-eminent ones are as follows —"

All day long he gave himself over to his labors. His wife was as anxious as he was. For the time she thought less about her lovely, almond-shaped eyes and white teeth than about the issue of the dreaded examination. Indeed the result of this seemed to her almost of more consequence than the flat-browed little boy babe which she bore upon her lap, and which had signalized the past year by coming into the world to bless her.

It was absurd that they should starve as underlings in a mandarin's household when Seng had the ability at length to become, may be, a mandarin himself.

People took to stopping Seng in the streets, and paying him wonderful compliments. They also implored him, of his infinite courtesy, to oblige them by succeeding as a candidate. They were interested in his success or failure to the extent of — an indefinite number of taels.

This was of course exceedingly pleasant from one point of view. It was the kind of thing that could not fail to encourage a sanguine student. But, on the other hand, though at first Seng took it as a high honor, and would blush when his virtues and application were so elaborately extolled to his face, by and by he began to feel that there was a responsibility about his position which affected his nerves.

"It is dreadful, my peacock eye," he said to his wife one day when he felt very tenderly towards her, "it is dreadful to understand that upon my own unaided achievements depends the happiness or the disappointment of so many of my fellow-creatures."

"But why need it be? Is it not their

own affair? You do not ask them to believe you so sure of a place," urged the girl.

"No, I do not. But you perceive it is the same thing, do you not? or you would if your intelligence were of the masculine order. And is it not written in the fifth section of the third chapter of the eight-and-twentieth volume of the great master that—that; but upon the whole I need not perplex my mind with the memory of unnecessary learning. It is rare indeed that this part of the great master's collected writings are made use of in the schools."

"I cannot see that you are to blame in any way!"

"Nor are you asked to interest yourself so deeply in what is, perchance, beyond you. Behold the beginning and the end for which thou wast created!"

With these words Seng pointed to the child of which he was the father. There was no answering so forcible a rejoinder.

In his heart our friend was, however, in very much doubt after all as to his ability to win for his unknown friends the money they had invested upon him. He felt that his learning was of a halt and lame kind, and he knew only too well that unless the conditions were all in his favor he should not show at his best. With advancing years certain bodily distresses had come upon him. That leaden dragon, indigestion, in particular, harassed him, and tied up the mouth of his wallet of memory only too often.

"I pray that I may succeed, but I cannot tell. I cannot tell. As a person of priceless wisdom said in the reign of—in the reign of— It was during the Ming dynasty, but I cannot recollect the venerable individual's name, nor his exact words, though I have a diamond-clear sense of their significance."

So the days crept on until it was the eve of the opening of the great competition. Peking palpitated with the sound of repeated phrases, and with the throbbing of the hearts of the thousands of expectant students.

Seng was washing his face preparatory to eating his frugal supper when a visitor of distinction was announced. Countless were the obeisances the visitor's servant offered to Seng, and Seng required them to the visitor himself.

The latter then expressed his wish to see our friend by himself, and to say something for his private ear. It was easily arranged. And immediately, without preamble, the visitor stated that he had come

to do his utmost to induce Seng to withdraw from the examination.

"I am able, most learned sir, to propose to you the sum of ten thousand taels as a compensation for your obliging sacrifice."

"Ten thousand taels!" exclaimed Seng, with natural surprise.

"It is true. I need not disguise it from a person of your perspicacity. The public have backed you—pardon the unscholarly phrase, I entreat—have backed you to such an extent that rather than pay up your series, most respected Piseng, we will endow you with this stupendous sum. You do not surely think it too little, by the side of the beggarly five hundred taels of income which may be the reward of your intellect-breaking success."

"Oh no," said Seng. "It is indeed a great deal of money, but—"

"And by no means a dishonest proposal, most virtuous sir, to whom all the injunctions of our most sapient and excellent ancestors are as familiar as your wife's face, if I may be pardoned for mentioning it for the sake of the simile."

"It is not *very* honest," demurred the perplexed Seng; "but still I have heard of more unpardonable deeds."

"Infinitely more unpardonable deeds are daily committed in the kingdom, and not so much as one house-fly says 'you are to blame' to the persons who are guilty of them. But how far removed from the borderland of guilt is the action I am empowered to suggest to you, oh long-suffering sir? You are to sacrifice yourself, Piseng, for the good of others. Instead of reaping honor and a certain position (much over-estimated though this assuredly is), you bow your head to some destitute youth who is your inferior in mind-power, and you say to him, with a heart over-crowded with generosity: 'Take, my brother, the reward that would have been mine. I give it freely to you, and retire into private life to enjoy the fruits of my life-long acquaintance with virtue and noble sentences.'"

"The ten thousand taels will be in cash, I presume, not in land?" asked Seng hesitantly, and with a hurried look round about him.

"In the most undoubted of papers, great sir. They shall be turned into silver, if so it please you. Then your self-renunciatory mind has decided?"

Seng thought earnestly for a minute. By accepting this proposal he would be saved anxiety for the rest of his life. Even as an official there would be no end, but death, to the harassments and future

examinations before him. Then there was his child, so pink and white, and likely to have a large appetite.

"I will receive the ten thousand taels," said Seng, "and having them, I will quit Peking at once. It shall suffice for me henceforward that I pursue the three happinesses of long life, wealth, and a family of sons. My constitution, though impaired, may yet suffice for the first and last of these desirable ends. As for the wealth, your esteemed consideration and my own self-sacrifice in the present matter may serve as a stepping-stone to it. I have said."

"Most discreet Piseng," was the other's reply, and after a few more words he withdrew, promising that the money should be sent that same night.

In effect it was sent, and received, and the following morning, instead of sitting down to a tiresome desk, our friend, with his wife and child, and the money in portable form, set out for Canton, where he proposed to begin a new life devoted to commerce instead of official honor.

This desertion of literature for commerce was a sad drop in the world for our poor friend. As a student of the character, and a disciple of the great Confucius and Mencius, he was an aristocrat of the Flowery Land, though poor as a harbor coolie or a chair porter. But in taking to trade he degraded himself below the unlettered worker in the fields. The worst of it was that he ascribed this perversion of his better nature, not to his own unrighteous and lazy instincts, but to his mother's untiring and discontented spirit.

He proposed, however, to assuage the ghost's malignancy by paying a nice little sum to one of the most learned doctors of Feng-Shin (or ghost lore) in the country. If it were necessary to move the old lady's bones, even that also should be done, though the cost might be great.

It need hardly be added that the backers of the Piseng series in the examinations were exceedingly wroth with Seng. But they had no redress.

in regard to its treatment of his religious views. On the one hand these attacks seemed to call for a rejoinder, and on the other to forbid it. It was futile to reason with critics * who demanded of me an inspired as well as circumstantial knowledge of the life I had been called upon to depict, and were prepared to decline my unsupported authority for any one of its facts; who had framed for themselves a scheme of what that life must be, and measured not only my competence but my sincerity as a biographer by the degree in which I carried it out. I could only appeal from the unreason and the uncharitableness of the one class of judges to the more sympathetic justice of another; and the predominating kindness with which my work had been received rendered such an appeal superfluous. From the point of view of my own interest it seemed best that I should remain silent.

But my critics were not the only class with which I was concerned. They had awakened me to the probable existence of large groups of men and women whose faith in Mr. Browning was bound up with his supposed allegiance to the literal forms of Christianity, and had been wounded by my exposition of its error; and I felt with deep regret that, in wounding that faith, I had rendered myself responsible, not only to those who held it, but to him whose memory it enshrined. It occurred to me that the irritation which my statements had aroused was due in part to their brevity, in part also to their impersonal character; and that if I had made them at more length, and with more effort to explain and justify them, they might have carried more weight, and caused less pain in the proceeding. It seemed still possible to rectify the mistake, and at a great sacrifice of personal inclination I determined to do so. I sketched out the contents of an article which set forth in more detail what I understood to be Mr. Browning's faith, the reason he had given me for so understanding it, the positive and negative evidence in my favor to be discovered in the works. But meanwhile these very conclusions had been in the main endorsed by two important representatives of the Church press; and since then a critique of the "Life and Letters" in the *London Quarterly Review* has invested them with the authority of a very important Protestant sect. The writer, it

From The Contemporary Review.
THE RELIGIOUS OPINIONS OF ROBERT BROWNING.

BY MRS. SUTHERLAND ORR.

It has for some time been an anxious question with me whether or not I should make some answer to the attacks directed against my memoir of Robert Browning,

* As the *Contemporary Review* is read in America as well as in England, it may be well to specify that I only allude in this paper to certain English reviewers of my book.

is true, records my failure to say anything on the subject of Mr. Browning's "teaching" which has not been "misleading" or "commonplace;" but he treats the question of his heterodoxy as not even open to doubt; and the few words in which he summarizes his view abound in my sense to the extent almost of exceeding it. This coincidence did not render my explanations unnecessary, but it prescribed for them a different starting-point; and I was beginning to recast what I had written, when an unexpected incident changed for me the whole aspect of the situation.

In a dedicatory letter to his latest poem, "The Outcast," Mr. Robert Buchanan quotes a fragment of a conversation which took place, as he affirms, between Mr. Browning and himself, and which conveyed on Mr. Browning's part a categorical disclaimer of Christianity. The story has ere this become public property, since its natural circulation with the poem has been supplemented by that of a widely read literary review, which quoted and also enlarged upon it; and it will doubtless have given rise to some anxious speculations as to whether, or how far, Browning could have been capable of denying the faith he held; or of allowing himself to be credited with one which he did not hold. I can assert that he did neither of these things; and in re-stating what I know, I shall now have the satisfaction of vindicating his sincerity besides justifying my own position. I believe the incident here related to be true; I have no right to dispute Mr. Buchanan's assurance concerning it, and I know it to have been compatible with certain aspects of Mr. Browning's nature. I also believe, as firmly, that in the spirit and in the intention in which it is related, it conveys what was not true. Mr. Buchanan's reviewer in the *Literary World* has rightly interpreted the "emphatic *no!*" by which Mr. Browning answered the question whether or not he was a "Christian." It referred, without doubt, to some meaning of the term which Mr. Buchanan's words had suggested to him. "I am not *in that sense* a Christian" was what his denial contained. A momentary irritation suppressed the softening clause.

Mr. Browning neither was nor could be, at the time of which I speak, a Christian in the orthodox sense of the word; for he rejected the antithesis of good and evil, on which orthodox Christianity rests; he held, in common with Pantheists, though without reference to them, that every

form of moral existence is required for a complete human world. This conviction never rendered him callous towards the practical aspects of wrong-doing. No man was more capable of healthy moral indignation, or more anxious for the enforcement of human justice in its most stringent forms. But he would have denied eternal damnation under any conception of sin. He spurned the doctrine with his whole being as incompatible with the attributes of God; and, since inexorable divine judgment had no part in his creed, the official Mediator or Redeemer was also excluded from it. He even spoke of the Gospel teachings as valid only for mental states other than his own. But he never ceased to believe in Christ, as, mystically or by actual miracle, a manifestation of divine love. In his own way, therefore, he was and remained a Christian; and never, I am convinced, hesitated to declare himself such if he judged the moment fitting for doing so.

I do not know at how early a period his mind discarded the sterner aspects of the Christian faith. I am inclined to think that it never consciously entertained them. It was not in its nature to receive any body of doctrine in a stereotyped form; and the continuity he always claimed for his mental life also forbids the idea of a radical change of view as having at any time asserted itself within him. We may read orthodox Christianity into "Christmas Eve" and "Easter Day," the latter part of "Saul," the "Epistle of Karshish," and perhaps "A Death in the Desert." We may also, with a slight allowance for the dramatic mood, construe these poems in the wider sense to be discovered in all his later words and works; even in the vision of judgment depicted in "Easter Day," we find a culprit judged on his own merits, and the scheme of eternal punishment superseded by one of natural retribution. We have no reason for thinking that doctrine, as such, ever possessed any interest for him; his works bear little or no trace of the doctrinal controversies of his day; Bishop Blougram's "Apology" had no true bearing upon them. His Nonconformist training and still limited social experience might preclude any active interest in the Oxford Tractarian movement; but it is notable that this new quickening of the religious life of his country—this new phase of religious conflict in it—never even supplied him with a dramatic type. It was not till seventeen years after the appearance of the first tract that he published the one poem in

which some echo of doctrinal differences could be sought; and the question debated in "Christmas Eve" did not turn on doctrinal differences, or even on the validity of doctrine and the rights of individual thought. Its implied verdict was in favor of ultra-Protestantism; but its argument simply resolved itself into this: assuming Christ as the unfailing guide and the central reality of our religious life, how do we most truly conceive and, therefore, most truly worship him? Does his appeal to us lie through the primitive human emotions, the æsthetic imagination, or the critical reason? Is he nearest to us in the services of the Evangelical chapel, the ceremonial of the Roman Catholic Church, the discoveries of the German Rationalist professor? The conclusion would have been foregone at any moment of Mr. Browning's life.

When he came to reside in London, and gradually assumed his position in its intellectual world, the questions by which that world was divided naturally forced themselves upon his mind. Its scientific atmosphere was full of tests for his faith; and after disclaiming certain opinions which were implied in the name of Christian, he had still to vindicate within himself the essential Christianity which had become inwoven with the deepest currents of his life. When I first met him, after a lapse of many years, in the early summer of 1869, the traces of this spiritual disturbance were, I think, very apparent in him. The affirmations of belief which he made in the course of our conversations had a ring of self-defence scarcely justified by the circumstances which had immediately provoked them. "I know the difficulty of believing," he once said to me, when some question had arisen concerning the Christian scheme of salvation. "I know all that may be said against it, on the ground of history, of reason, of even moral sense. I grant even that it may be a fiction. But I am none the less convinced that the life and death of Christ, as Christians apprehend them, supply something which their humanity requires, and that it is true for them." He then proceeded to say why, in his judgment, humanity required Christ. "The evidence of divine power is everywhere about us; not so the evidence of divine love. That love could only reveal itself to the human heart by some supreme act of *human* tenderness and devotion; the fact, or fancy, of Christ's cross and passion could alone supply such a revelation." I did not, at the time, regard these words

as a plea for an even modified belief on his own part. What I read into them was an apology for the varying degrees of literalism with which the Christian doctrine has been accepted, as well as an expression of sympathy for its more mystical or more subjective forms. This was probably all he meant at the moment of speaking, although the need to which Christ responds was more real, even for him, than I then knew.

On another occasion, which I specially remember, he spoke of Christianity in relation to his own life; and he concluded what he had been saying, and I cannot now recall, by reading to me the Epilogue to "Dramatis Personæ." It will be remembered that its beautiful and pathetic second part is a cry of spiritual bereavement; the cry of those victims to nineteenth-century scepticism for whom the Incarnate Love had disappeared from the universe, carrying with it the belief in God. The third attests the continued presence of God in Christ as mystically manifest to the individual soul.

That one Face, far from vanish rather grows,
Or decomposes but to recompose,
Become my universe that feels and knows!

"That Face," he said, as he closed the book, "is the face of Christ. That is how I feel him."

The divine presence thus affirmed impressed me; however, as a humanized or naturalistic aspect of the Deity, rather than God in human form; and, when I began the "Handbook" in 1882, I could still give it as my conviction that Christ was for him a spiritual mystery, much more than a definable or dogmatic fact. I may add that on this, as on every other point, my treatment of his religious views received his unqualified approbation. But the line, which in his conception of Christianity, divided spiritual experience from external fact can at no time have been firmly drawn. It was scarcely conceivable that it should be. Six years before the "Handbook" was contemplated he had written to a lady, who "believed herself dying," a letter, now frequently quoted, which claimed for intuition the value of actual knowledge in regard to the divinity of Christ; and in later days he himself asserted that divinity on the strength of certain incidents of the Gospel narrative in regard to which his known mistrust of human evidence must have been suspended. It was not till after his death that I learned the existence of this letter, though I knew something of the circum-

stances in which it must have been written; but I gave full weight to its contents, reiterated as they had been in my own hearing; and it will be found that, in the memoir of the poet, I represent him as more definitely a Christian than I did when speaking of him in the "Handbook;" though the later statement could not receive his sanction, and the earlier had done so.

The one consistent fact of Mr. Browning's heterodoxy was its exclusion of any belief in revelation. He had framed for himself a gospel of uncertainty; and, whether this related itself to his scepticism as cause or as effect, it was rooted in his religious life. I have touched on it in the memoir in reference to "Easter Day," and the discrepancies to be noted between the teaching of this poem and that of "Christmas Eve;" but it is more distinctly formulated in his later works. The "Pope" deplors the existing certainties of belief and the habit of mind engendered by them, as answerable for the depravities which he is called upon to judge. John, dying in the desert, and reaffirming his own faith in the mournful prophetic vision of an age of doubt, pleads the value of receding knowledge to the quickened spiritual life. I need hardly suggest that it is neither the seventeenth-century pope nor the Evangelist John who thus anticipates the perplexities of our modern thought; but the poet's own soul, which cries to us in their words.

This condition is best illustrated by his attitude towards the question of immortality; and that again is brought home to us in the letter to which I have referred, and which several critics have accused me of ignoring, as hostile to my own judgment of the case. I now quote it in full:

It is a great thing—the greatest—that a human being should have passed the probation of life, and sum up its experience in a witness to the power and love of God. I dare congratulate you. All the help I can offer in my poor degree is the assurance that I see ever more reason to hold by the same hope, and that by no means in ignorance of what has been advanced to the contrary, and for your sake I would wish it to be true that I had so much of "genius" as to permit the testimony of an especially privileged insight to come in aid of the ordinary argument. For I know I myself have been aware of the communication of something more subtle than a ratiocinative process when the convictions of genius have thrilled my soul to its depths; as when Napoleon, shutting up the New Testament, said of Christ: "Do you know, I am an understander of men? Well, he was no man." (Savez-

vous que je me connais en hommes? Eh bien, celui-là ne fût pas un homme); or, as when Charles Lamb in a gay fancy with some friends as to how he and they would feel if the greatest of the dead were to appear suddenly in flesh and blood once more, on the final suggestion, "And if Christ entered this room?" changed his manner at once, and stuttered out, as his manner was when moved, "You see, if Shakespeare entered we should all rise. If *He* appeared we must kneel;" or, not to multiply instances, as when Dante wrote what I will transcribe from my wife's testament, wherein I recorded it fourteen years ago: "Thus I believe, thus I affirm, thus I am certain it is; and that from this life I shall pass to another better, there where that Lady lives of whom my soul was enamored." Dear friend, I may have wearied you in spite of your good-will. God bless, sustain, and receive you. Reciprocate this blessing with yours affectionately,

ROBERT BROWNING.

We learn from these words that he had been "thrilled" by the conviction of Dante as, on a different point, by that of Charles Lamb and of Napoleon. It had found a vivid response in his own mind. But his habitual condition was that of simple hope; and it appears to me that if the reiterated affirmings of the great Italian poet had proceeded directly from himself, they would have proved him no nearer to the Christian certitude which acknowledges a divinely revealed fact and leaves no room for affirmation. That Dante was a believer, and nevertheless affirmed, was a singular circumstance which does not affect the position.

It will perhaps be argued that the uncertainties implied in Mr. Browning's expression of hope referred, not to the fact of eternal life, but to his own destined admission to it. This idea cannot for a moment be entertained. The life beyond the grave, which that hope foreshadowed, was no more for him necessarily a scene of reward than, in any conceivable case, one of eternal punishment. It involved neither conditions of fitness nor possibility of exclusion. It was simply a continuance of the life begun on earth; another stage in the development of the divine scheme of creation.

The hope of renewed existence was in his case the impulse of a nature too vivid to admit the thought of annihilation. It was justified by his belief in the existence of God and in the immateriality of the soul. But it clearly borrowed nothing from the words of Christ, and it sought a negative confirmation in the very absence of a promise, which, as he strove to demon-

strate, would itself have neutralized the conditions of its fulfilment. The demonstration was worked out in "La Saisiaz," by what process I need not repeat, since I have described it in the "Life," and more in detail in the "Handbook;" but it may be worth while to add that the main argument of the poem as given in the "Handbook" was not only endorsed by Mr. Browning; it was directly supplied by him. (This is my answer to a critic who taxes me with not appreciating the real drift of the poem.) The whole remainder of my work was only submitted to him in proof, thus receiving the corrections which I have mentioned in the second edition. "La Saisiaz" offered no difficulties which I could not have dealt with in the same way; but I had an extraneous reason for desiring that, in this case, the interpretation of the poem should proceed from the author's lips. I begged him to give me a short statement of its argument and its conclusion; and he answered the request by bringing me a prose abstract of the dialogue between "Fancy" and "Reason," and saying, "It is all there." I almost verbally copied the little manuscript, supplying, of course, the general summary of the poem myself.

The arguments advanced by "Reason" in support of uncertainty do not, however, show him at his best. They do not display the usual subtlety of his appreciations of human life. They either ignore the immense advantage possessed by the near over the far, the known over the unknown, in all the normal conditions of our existence, or they confuse the conceivable certainty of a future state with a knowledge of its circumstance, which has no part in the question. They apply at best to that crude idea of eternal reward and punishment which is excluded from his habitual point of view. There were moments when he himself would have welcomed a more positive guarantee for a life beyond the grave than his practically pure theism could supply; though his tone concerning this and other objects of belief became more confident as his life advanced.

Mr. Browning's theism was more definite than his Christianity, but his mental idiosyncrasies were still more strongly impressed upon it. The metaphysical and the emotional elements which composed it did not combine, as is usually the case, into the theological idea of God. His abstract idea of the Deity was, in fact, far more the Supreme Being of metaphysics than the God of theology; and the human attributes which enter into the received

idea of God were with him superadded to the first conception. This fact connects itself with a passage in my book which has been subjected to special criticism, and which also I desire to amplify and explain, for the reasons given at the beginning of this paper. The passage is this:—

But such weaknesses as were involved in his logical position are inherent to all the higher forms of natural theology when once it has been erected into a dogma. As maintained by Mr. Browning, this belief held a saving clause, which removed it from all dogmatic, hence all admissible grounds of controversy: the more definite or concrete conceptions of which it consists possessed no finality for even his own mind; they represented for him an absolute truth in contingent relations to it. No one felt more strongly than he the contradictions involved in any conceivable system of Divine creation and government. No one knew better that every act and motive which we attribute to a Supreme Being is a virtual negation of his existence. He believed nevertheless that such a Being exists; and he accepted his reflection in the mirror of the human consciousness, as a necessarily false image, but one which bears witness to the truth.

God could only exist for Mr. Browning as source and origin of thought; in this respect, therefore, as first and last word of creation. But he otherwise imagined him in all the negations of pure being. ("Caliban upon Setebos" was only a travesty of his natural conviction that a complete divine existence could contain no motive for the making of a world.) He was at best a colorless Omnipotence, or a power combined with will. It was because the Deity of his conception had nothing in common with the emotional life of man, that Christ, whether in his mystical or historical character, became for him a necessity of belief; and I can account in no other way for the constant appeal which meets us in all his works of the middle period against the denial of Christ or the worship of a "loveless" God. Its full dramatic justification is only to be found in the mind of David. Its personal inspiration cannot have proceeded from the poet's external life. Religious heterodoxy has been always directed against the avenging aspects of the Deity. The arguments which impugn his love proceed from wider grounds of disbelief, and are combated in this sense in the epilogue to "Dramatis Personæ." The problem of suffering may have been more present to him in those years of marriage and the first period of his widowhood than it was

in the later stages of his life; but it never assumed for him the magnitude in which it so often seems, to perplexed believers, to block out either the goodness or the power of the Creator. His strongest means of defence were always evoked by the spectre of some inward opposition; and I am convinced that it was so in the present case. He was wrestling with himself, with his own metaphysical imagination, for the belief in a living God. The inward conflict would be the more real that the traditional belief in Christ had taken possession of his heart before the conceptions which, in a sense, excluded it could have formed themselves in his understanding. The human impulse which demanded Christ prevailed in the conflict. It dictated to him the practical terms of his religion. It banished the metaphysical conception to the sphere of non-working truths. The belief remained non-theological because it accepted no compromise between the two.

It is impossible to describe a very complex nature from even a sustained point of view without incurring the appearance of inconsistency; and I confess that, when I began the "Handbook," a somewhat different and more uniform impression of Mr. Browning's faith had established itself in my mind. But he had not then published "Ferishtah's Fancies;" and, as his actual life shaped itself in the memoir, one of the parables of this work flashed upon me, in connection with his spoken words, as striking the true key-note of his religious belief. I have referred my readers to this poem at the close of the very passage which was in part inspired by it; but my critics have found it convenient to ignore the fact. The parable is that of the "Sun." In it the Supreme Being is symbolized by that heat-and-life-giving orb which is sometimes worshipped as a divinity. The speaker dwells on the difficulties of worship, where the giver of all good may be credited with neither benevolent consciousness in the gift nor sensibility to the gratitude which it inspires; and in so doing he sets forth what was, for the poet himself, the logical dilemma of the conception of God. The italics are mine:—

*Prime cause this fire shall be,
Uncaused, all-causing: hence begin the gifts,
Thither must go my love and praise—to what?
Fire! Symbol fitly serves the symbolized
Herein,—that this same object of my thanks,
While to my mind nowise conceivable
Except as mind no less than fire, refutes
Next moment mind's conception: fire is fire—*

While what I needs must thank, must needs include

Purpose with power,—humanity like mine,
Imagined, for the dear necessity,
One moment in an object which the next
Confesses unimaginable. *Power!*
— *What need of will, then? what opposes power?*
Why, purpose? any change must be for worse:
And what occasion for beneficence
When all that is, so is and so must be;
Best being best now, change were for the worse.

*Accordingly discard these qualities
Proper to imperfection, take for type
Mere fire, eject the man, retain the orb,—
The perfect and, so, inconceivable,—
And what remains to love and praise?*

Ferishtah has previously said:—

For as our liege the Shah's sublime estate
Merely enhaloes, leaves him man the same,
So must I count that orb I call a fire
(Keep to the language of our ignorance)
Something that's fire and more beside.

And he now evolves the doctrine of a double being in God, from the necessity of discovering an object for the higher emotions of mankind:—

Even so

Man's soul is moved by what, if it in turn
Must move, is kindred soul: receiving good
— Man's way—must make man's due acknowledgment,

No other, *even while he reasons out
Plainly enough that, were the man unmanned,
Made angel of, angelic every way,
The love and praise that rightly seek and find
Their man-like object now,—instructed more,
Would go forth idly, air to emptiness.*
Our human flower, sun-ripened, proffers scent
Though reason prove the sun lacks nose to feed

On what himself made grateful: flower and man

Let each assume that scent and love alike
Being once born, must needs have use! Man's part

Is plain—to send love forth,—astray, perhaps:

No matter, he has done his part.

Wherefrom

What is to follow—if I take thy sense—
But that the sun—the inconceivable
Confessed by man,—comprises, all the same,
*Man's every-day conception of himself—
No less remaining unconceived!*

When Mr. Browning wrote this parable, the question which it embodied had, for all effective purposes, solved itself in his mind. Then, as so often in matters of faith, the object of his reasonings was to defend a foregone conclusion. The belief in Christ had asserted itself as guarantee for the human sympathies of the Creator; and, without losing in strength, had re-

ceded from the foreground of his conviction. His language was, in later years, more habitually that of a theist than that of a Christian. And, as his abstract Supreme Being was more remote than the God of Christian theology, so was the God of his real life more familiarly near, more anthropomorphic in character than the image of Deity usually reflected by the educated religious mind. I had once occasion to think that no alleged instance of divine intervention could strain his powers of belief. He was willing to admit that, in this concrete form, his faith must be a delusion; but he held it as imposed upon him by the conditions of his humanity, and as justified by them.

If I were called upon to re-write the condemned passage in my conclusion, I should make a few verbal alterations; I should not say "no one *felt* more strongly than he the contradictions involved in any conceivable scheme of divine creation and government," because the ground of *feeling* in him was entirely occupied by belief. I should try to find some expression which confined his doubt to the purely intellectual sphere to which it belonged. I should also substitute "*logical*" for "*virtual*" in the phrase "virtual negation of his existence." The word "*false*," which occurs in the same paragraph, is, I admit, too strong in its habitual connotation, and I did not use it without misgiving; but I do not think I could have discovered a more fitting one. The "*imperfect*," prescribed by one of my critics, would have been wide of the mark, since its suggestions are only those of insufficiency. Mr. Browning had spontaneously admitted that the Christian scheme might be a fiction, a transposition of truth, judged necessary for its attunement to the present sense of mankind. Why might not he impute some such relative and fleeting character to his own conception of God? Why should not this represent for him a disguised or transformed reality, through which the unthinkable had been brought into the sphere of human thought?

It may be argued against me that his nature bore concordant testimony to the validity of his beliefs, and that the metaphysical or imaginative subtleties which I have described in him unnecessarily complicate the question. It may be urged that that which transcends experience can have no authoritative form wherein to present itself to the mind which thinks it, and that a generally accepted transcendental idea must include all the personal elements which may enter into its concep-

tion. I might reply that this personal or subjective element of thought was especially important in Mr. Browning's case; that it was a prominent feature of a very distinctive individuality. I should not, however, have dwelt upon it in so brief a survey of his life if I had been only writing for those who share his beliefs, and for whom he was not only a great poet but a great thinker, because the assumptions as well as conclusions of his reasoning processes were such as they hold true. But I also wrote for that large class of educated men and women for whom his assumptions and his conclusions are, to say the least, not proved, and who, while they love and revere him as a great poet, have yet to be convinced that he was, in the strict sense of the term, a thinker at all. No one desires less than I do to promulgate such a conviction. I have always protested against what I felt to be the distortion of a great creative nature into something other, and therefore smaller, than it was meant to be. No man is a great poet who has not within him the materials and the capacity for thought; but his mental processes are opposed to those of the thinker, and it is his function to step in where thought can no longer find its way. When, however, the failure in intellectual method is imputed to Mr. Browning as a reproach, it is the duty of his biographer to defend him where this is possible. I have shown in my conclusion through what special and recent utterance the reproach had been brought home to him; and I tried to show that, while this was often justified by his works, a deeper insight into the operations of his mind would rob it of a great deal of its force. I felt that, in that vision of different planes of truth, of which we find an imperfect reflection in his casuistry, he had proved himself, though not a systematic thinker, one who, by his faculty of poet, could grasp the deepest subtleties to which thought can attain. Feeling this, it was incumbent on me to say so.

I have been severely censured by the Nonconformist press for not stating in the biography that Mr. Browning had been educated as a Dissenter; and I shall scarcely disarm my judges by assuring them that I passed over the fact for no other reason than that, at the time of writing the memoir, it did not present itself to my mind. They may fairly say that biographies are not written from memory, and that I was bound to re-inform myself on so important a subject as the poet's religious antecedents before I attempted even

an outline of his life. I have no alternative but to admit that I have never learned to establish a necessary distinction between one class of genuine Protestants and another; while in the case of one so truly "independent" as Mr. Browning, the name of the sect which claimed him would always have appeared to me a loose label to be worn or pushed aside. I cannot believe that he never told me of his Nonconformist training, when he told me so much else about his child-life. I can now even fancy I remember his doing so. I may have heard from him what I now learn through another person, that Mr. Clayton (of York Chapel) was anxious that he should enter the ministry, thus originating the rumor which I have lately contradicted that he himself felt called to do so. But such facts, as I have implied, seemed irrelevant to all I knew of him in those late days, and even the words concerning them which I inserted in Miss Browning's name failed to arouse me to any effective consciousness of their existence.

Looking back, as I now do, on Mr. Browning's career, from a somewhat more distant and more historical point of view, I see that I have been mistaken; and that the influences which I overlooked as without import to his later life had been probably a strong ingredient in its formation. I believe that the vital elements of his religious faith were derived from Nonconformity, and could with difficulty have been derived from any other source; not because they embodied its independent spirit, but because they possessed a glow and fervor which, during those first years of the nineteenth century, were almost absent from the Church. I have remarked in the biography, though without referring it to the probable cause, on the Evangelical spirit which had survived in him the almost complete extinction of Christian doctrine; and writing upon him, so far back as eighteen years ago, I noted in one of his works a vein of religious imagination which impressed me as Puritan. But I have also had occasion to say that the Evangelical Christian was allied in him to the subjective philosophic idealist; in other words, that the vivid sense of spiritual personality had with him its counterpart in the intellectual sphere. This was instanced by an impression, to which he was subject, that all reality centred in himself; that the world he lived in was an illusion of his own mind. The feeling scarcely accorded with his abstract religious ideas, and represented at best, in

his case, one of those caprices of consciousness on which, for general purposes, it is unprofitable to dwell. It will, however, be owned that a mind thus constituted must be open to many forms of experience; and that the permanent beliefs which could underlie them all would become sooner or later to him who held them, their only essential feature. My indifference to the probable mode of Mr. Browning's early religious training was undoubtedly, in great measure, an echo of his own. I cannot but regret an omission which was so marked a fault in a biographer. In so far, however, as my memoir of Robert Browning was a picture of him, it has lost nothing through it.

Some critical comments have been also evoked by my ignoring, as it appeared, the Nonconformist inspiration of "Christmas Eve;" but that question was not included in my temporary point of view, so I cannot be justly said to have ignored it. Mr. Browning's experience of Dissent, and his respect for it, most probably suggested the dramatic motive of the poem; but they did not explain what was the subject of my remarks, its late appearance, and its isolated position in the general series of his work. I may also add that the scene in the little chapel is described with a minimum of religious emotion, while the crowning moment of the mass, as witnessed at St. Peter's, is brought before us in a spirit of awe-struck adoration, which might be held to prove a strong personal sympathy with Rome. It only proves that Mr. Browning was, before everything, a poet; though the fact still needs reiteration.

I have yet to notice a prevalent conception of his life and work, which has inspired in great measure the attacks made on my book, and which is, to my mind, no less untrue to his genius as a poet than powerless to support in him any consistent image of the man. The idea is this, that his life can be only known through his work, and his work be only judged through his history. Its first aspect is amusingly illustrated by my critic in the *London Quarterly Review*, who treats some statements, made by me from long-standing knowledge of Mr. Browning's character, as "conclusions," for which there is "some ground" in the works of the corresponding period. The second is expressed by him in the following words:—

We are not about to attempt to find in Browning a "system" of thought. He lives in the midst of various humanity, and his poems reflect all its changing lights and fleet-

ing moods and conflicting passions. . . . But, on the other hand, to conclude that this man, who all his life was wrestling with the problems of life, came to no clear or worthy conclusions, or none that he wished to communicate to others, is to stultify the whole of Browning's writings.

I do not know what conclusions, or what amount of verbal testifying to them, are the received practical equivalent (especially under this latest definition) of Mr. Browning's poetry. I think I have made it clear that the last word of his experience was that of Pippa's faith:—

God's in his heaven —
All's right with the world!

though I did not repeat the lines, and though my reviewer includes them in a number of well-worn, though none the less beautiful, passages, which he has rediscovered for my confusion. But if the poet's personal life had been one long note of interrogation, or one mistaken answer, I cannot for a moment admit that his "writings" would have been "stultified" by it. There is, indeed, a vital connection between the poet and the man; in Robert Browning they were often indistinguishable. But there can be for that very reason no greater mistake than to suppose that their activities properly stand to each other in the order of theory to fact, of text to sermon, or of autobiography to the experience of a life. I have no desire to discuss this question, which carries with it the whole psychology of creative art. But I should like to recall attention to an aspect of Mr. Browning's work in which resides, not the intellectual, but the one unfailing moral bond between himself and it. He often wrote under natural impulses, and with the pleasure we all find in exercising such faculties as we possess; but he wrote, primarily and always, under the impression that it was his duty to do so. He held his genius as a "talent" entrusted to him, and which he was bound not to bury out of sight, but to put out to the fullest interest in the bank of life. He held himself bound to observe life in whatever form it came to him; and report on it, not for the information, but in the sight of, "our Lord, the King." His report was always disinterested, though he received for it its market value; for he held it above money's worth. It was always sincere; for he always believed it to be true. He was also often sympathetically present in the emotions and reasonings which he described; they were often expressed in his own name. The reli-

gious faith conveyed by his collective writings was his own faith. The few moral, as opposed to religious, judgments which can be elicited from their varied points of view, were as certainly endorsed by his own conscience. But the genuineness of his productions, what constituted for him their morality, was independent of even these facts.

I have desired to recall attention to this view of Mr. Browning's work, because it is already clearly indicated in the life; although the full bearing of the fact, and also of the letter which illustrates it, has been doubtless overlooked by those of my critics who read the book for what it did not contain, and not for what it did. The letter is dated December, 1864. There was probably no period of Mr. Browning's career at which the man and the work might be so reasonably identified with each other. A mighty sorrow had swept over his being, quickening it for the moment to a deeper sense of the tragic possibilities and yet hopeful import of life. The questionings and emotions which most impress us in "Dramatis Personæ" had their natural explanation, and often their certain counterpart, in himself. Yet we know, from his own words, that these poems were produced in no dominantly lyric or dramatic impulse, but with the energy of one who has discovered his life's work; and who loves the work in itself, but no less the consciousness that it has been well performed. The words I speak of form a mere fragment of a letter, but their meaning is only heightened by their allusion to its omitted part:—

. . . On the other hand, I feel such comfort and delight in doing the best I can with my own object of life, poetry—which, I think, I never could have seen the good of before, that it shows me I have taken the root I *did* take *well*. I hope to do much more yet—and that the flower of it will be put into her hand somehow. I really have great opportunities and advantages—on the whole, almost unprecedented ones—I think, no other disturbances and cares than those I am most grateful for being allowed to have. . . . (Life, p. 266.)

A year earlier he had said, "I wrote a poem yesterday of one hundred and twenty lines, and mean to keep writing, whether I like it or not." The letter points, it is true, to a seriousness and simplicity of habit which could not maintain themselves against Mr. Browning's increasing fame and the renewed insistencies of life; but it is typical of the convictions which inspired his least impressive no less than

his greatest work. Work thus conceived may be allied to mistaken judgments; but it carries its standards within itself. The writer in Robert Browning could not be stultified by the sternest justice, or the most insidious injustice, that might be brought to bear on him as a man.

I am well aware that the special lines of criticism on which I have now touched all converge in a more general, and perhaps more widely felt, objection to my treatment of Mr. Browning's life. My latest reviewer is not the only person who is willing to dissociate him from all idea of dogmatic belief, and yet claims for the religious element in his experience a greater prominence than I am held to have given to it; and whether the appeal against me lies to the supposed evidence of the works, or to that of the life, the same note of disappointment is discernible in it. I might be accused of disingenuousness if I ignored this fact. I can only answer it in the words of the biography. That biography was inevitably meagre. Full material had been wanting for its early and central parts. Mr. Browning's recent death had obviously closed against it some later sources of information. Its unsatisfying nature has been alike admitted by those for whom reticence is a merit, and those who regard it as a fault.* My personal judgments of Mr. Browning's character could be only entirely valid for the period at which I intimately knew him; that is, for the last twenty years of his life; and it will be noted by all those who read the book fairly that, except in certain constant and conspicuous qualities, or by such retrospective statements as he himself enabled me to make, I have only confidently described him in reference to that time. Something of stress and strain had naturally passed out of his life. Some tendencies had become more active; others had fallen into abeyance. The man of sixty or seventy can never fully represent the man of middle age. But the balance of qualities will maintain itself till time has laid upon the brain which holds it its disintegrating last touch; and my picture of Mr. Browning will remain a true picture, as the biography with all deductions remains a true biography, because no one feature has been developed at the expense of another; no detail has been introduced which any subsequently added can avail to falsify or obscure. I trust there exist very few persons for

whom it is necessary to add that, if I had not felt the true picture of Robert Browning to be also a lovable picture, I should have left to another hand the task of drawing it.

From The Spectator.

BROWNING'S THEOLOGY.

MRS. SUTHERLAND ORR has not the art of perspicuous exposition. Her new contribution to the discussion concerning Browning's religious attitude makes vagueness vaguer and mysticism more mystical. Probably Mrs. Sutherland Orr is right in contending that Browning, — in this respect resembling other poets, even Wordsworth, for example, — was very jealous of its being supposed that he accepted literally the cut-and-dried formulas of any Christian Church. Great idealists see farther into the significance of the spiritual faith they adopt than the ordinary catechists, and very naturally shrink from binding themselves by dogmatic phrases which may very inadequately represent the insight of an elevated imagination. In "Saul," in "Christmas Eve and Easter Day," in "The Ring and the Book," and fifty other poems, Browning has endeavored to depict the very heart of his own faith, and of course he prefers his own mode of indicating that faith to that of the narrow-minded Evangelical preacher, or the technical scholastic theologian, or the cold rationalistic critic. No doubt he told Mr. Buchanan that in his (Mr. Buchanan's) sense of the term, he did not profess to be a Christian; but, as Mrs. Sutherland Orr puts it, we want to know exactly what meaning Mr. Buchanan had put upon the term, before we can attach any great importance to this asserted denial. It is as plain as vivid imaginative expressions can make it, that if Browning was not in some very deep and true sense a Christian, — a believer even in the divinity of Christ, — his language is elaborately adapted rather to conceal and misrepresent his mind, than to express it. Nor do we know at all what Mrs. Sutherland Orr means by distinguishing between belief in Christ and belief in revelation, and even asserting the former belief strongly on Mr. Browning's behalf, while denying the latter. Belief in the divinity of Christ is absolutely inconceivable without the belief in revelation. Such a belief implies not only the hearty acceptance of Christ's humanity as our

* The comprehensive title of which my friend and publisher, Mr. George Smith, has judged the book worthy has perhaps served to heighten this impression.

ideal, but of Christ's humanity as setting forth and embodying the mind of God. What does revelation mean except the unveiling of God, the lifting of the veil from the otherwise inscrutable nature of the Creator? Yet Mrs. Sutherland Orr, in her new *Contemporary* article, while she declares Browning to have been a hearty Christian in the sense of holding, and holding with more and more confidence as life advanced, the divine love to have been manifested in Christ's cross and passion, declares that "the one consistent fact of Mr. Browning's heterodoxy was its exclusion of any belief in revelation." We do not hesitate to say that whatever a "consistent fact" in the abstract may mean, such a fact as this is not at all consistent with the definite Christianity she has conceded to him. If Mr. Browning believed (as he did) in Christ as manifesting God's love to man, he believed in him as revealing God. If he did not hold that Christ revealed God, he did not believe in his divinity at all,—the one reality in which he evidently did believe. Mrs. Sutherland Orr asserts, indeed, that the possibility of Browning's belief in the Christian revelation is practically "excluded" by the fact that he insists on the uncertainties of faith, and that he speaks as follows in one place of the relation of Christ to our belief: "The evidence of divine power is everywhere about us; not so the evidence of divine love. That love could only reveal itself to the human heart by some supreme act of *human* tenderness and devotion; the fact or fancy of Christ's cross or passion could alone supply such a revelation." Here, as Mrs. Sutherland Orr triumphantly points out, we find Mr. Browning declaring that even if the story of Christ's cross and passion be a fancy, it still seizes on the human heart, and accounts for the hold taken upon human faith. And again, Mrs. Sutherland Orr points out that in "The Ring and the Book," Mr. Browning makes his meditative pope deplore the dogmatic certainties in which men rest too idly; and further, that he represents the evangelist John as predicting that an age of doubt,—of receding certainty,—will quicken men's spiritual life, which has been too much petrified by mechanical clinging to ossified creeds. Besides, says Mrs. Sutherland Orr, Browning's whole attitude towards the belief in immortality is an attitude not of confident assurance, but of lively hope. And lively hope implies at least some uncertainty of the thing hoped for. Well, if Mrs. Sutherland Orr will

extend that reasoning, she will be able to prove that the apostles did not believe in any revealed immortality. "We are saved by hope," says St. Paul; "if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." "Be ready always," says St. Peter, "to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you." St. John, speaking of the prospect of seeing God as he is, says: "Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure." Hence it seems to us ridiculous to argue that because Mr. Browning spoke of immortality as a hope, and, we may truly say, as a more and more confident hope as life drew on, he could not have believed in Christ's revelation in a sense closely similar to that in which the apostles themselves believed in it. If his hope was not strictly apostolic in degree, it was apostolic in kind. As for the phrase, "The fact or fancy of Christ's cross or passion could alone supply such a revelation," we think the context shows that Browning regarded the need of man as so deep that even the fancy, if it had been a mere fancy, would have proved itself a revelation of the divine love which had inspired such a fancy. There is what may seem a still stronger passage quoted by Mrs. Sutherland Orr: "I know all that may be said against it [the Christian scheme of salvation] on the ground of history, of reason, of even moral sense. I grant even that it may be a fiction. But I am none the less convinced that the life and death of Christ, as Christians apprehend them, supplies something which their humanity requires, and that it is true for them." That means surely that Mr. Browning conceives the possibility that Christians may have misunderstood completely the theology implied in the life and death of Christ, but that whether they have misunderstood it or not,—and he only puts the possibility that they may have misunderstood it,—the very misunderstanding involves a glimpse of the deep, tender, and inexhaustible love of God. Such a conception is doubtless what is called heterodox. It is not the conception of the Christian Church. But it is a conception leading men to the Christian faith (just as a signpost leads a man to the place to which it points), since it points to a great revelation,— "revelation" is Mr. Browning's own word,—of the love of God such as the Christian faith was intended to announce. Even on the chance that the scheme of revelation was a fiction, Brown-

ing certainly held that it was a fiction based upon a great subjective truth; and even had he thought it a fiction, he would have agreed more with those who held it to be a fact, than he would have agreed with those who simply ignored it as an idle fable. And, as a matter of fact, these hypothetical admissions were only hypothetical. No one who reads Browning's greater poems can doubt for a moment that the whole drift and tendency of his mind and life went in the opposite direction, towards a deeper and deeper value for the Christian revelation, and not towards a more decided distrust of it.

We do not doubt in the least that Browning was not what could be called an orthodox disciple of any Christian Church. To our minds, he often verges on pantheism in his optimistic treatment of all forms of evil as in some sense necessary and of divine causation. No doubt his mind held to what is called universalism, and to optimism generally. He never laid any hold of the notion that there was a tradition and a Church which might be a safer guide to Christian truth than the individual instincts of each separate soul. He was an individualist to the core, and believed much more in the guidance of the affections to which his heart inclined, than in the guidance of the reason. Still, the one deepest belief of his life was that Christ revealed the divine mind and the divine purpose in a sense so profound, that the doctrine of the incarnation was to him a real word of God. He was not an Athanasian. Perhaps even he did not hold theologically the whole of the Nicene Creed. But he held to the incarnation in a sense much more eager and much more progressive and much more constant, than he held to any of the doubts or hesitations which the opponents of that doctrine had suggested to him. Browning had no faith in any ecclesiastical guidance, sectarian or otherwise. Though brought up a Dissenter, all that he retained of Dissent was his intense individualism, his inability to submit himself to any mediate guide to God. But certainly we may say this of him, that his hypothetical doubts had far less part in him than his growing and passionate belief. Mrs. Sutherland Orr has not made things much plainer by her disquisitions on the obscure passages in "Ferishta's Fancies" and "La Saisiaz," or any other of Browning's crude transcendentalisms of later years. These half-baked compositions, which mark rather his later impatience of the difficulty of expressing thought in adequate speech, than

his earlier power to mould for himself a rough but most effective and impressive form of speech, will never count much for the exposition either of his faith or his genius. But they at least show that he became more and more convinced that Christ is the great revelation of God, as he grew older, incoherent as many of his attempts to affirm this were. To the world in general, "Saul," "Christmas Eve and Easter Day," the story of the Arabian physician concerning the resurrection of Lazarus, and "The Ring and the Book," will remain Browning's high-water mark as a religious poet, though not perhaps his high-water mark as a Christian believer. He was a heterodox Christian, no doubt, with certain pantheistic leanings, but he was a Christian of the utmost intensity. He believed, from his heart, that Christ revealed God, and was personally the divine Son of God, in a sense a great deal deeper and a great deal more vivid and personal than most orthodox Christians.

From The Sunday Magazine.

BIRDS ON THEIR TRAVELS.

BY THE REV. THEODORE WOOD, F.E.S.

INSTINCT must be a great difficulty to the materialist; one of the greatest with which he has to contend. Whence is it? What is it? The secret tuition which directs the beaver to construct its dam, the squirrel to lay up its hidden stores, the spider to spin its silken web; the guiding impulse which in these latter days of the dying year is taking from us half our feathered friends, and bringing to us in their place a host of their hardier fellows. We have the facts. Every spring they come, every autumn they go. And as they arrive they meet others leaving, and as they leave they meet those others returning—a double ebb and flow of feathered life. And surely enough of interest attaches to these periodical migrations without the need for prying into questions which we shall never be able to answer, and discussing problems which no finite mind can solve. And, after all, we do know the two great causes which act as the principal factors in turning birds twice a year into feathered pilgrims. One cause is climate, the other cause is food. A bird like the fieldfare, although harder than its first cousin the thrush, is nevertheless unable to bear the rigors of a northern winter, and so travels southwards as soon as the leaves begin to fall. Some-

times even our winter is too severe for its constitution, and then it travels farther still, and spends just a few days with us on its return journey in the spring. The swift, on the other hand, a native of northern Africa, cannot endure the heat of a tropical summer, and so flies away northward in time to escape the pitiless scorching of an almost equatorial sun. Probably no bird is so sensitive to extremes of heat and cold. It leaves its home to avoid the heat, and yet suffers terribly if the air be chill in the land of its temporary sojourn. Often and often have swifts been picked up dying and dead in the later days of an English spring, chilled through and through by a biting northerly wind, or frozen by the cold blast which comes with the hail of a vernal thunder-storm.

The question of food, of course, is dependent upon that of climate. Autumn frosts begin, and the insects disappear, and so the birds which prey upon those insects are perforce obliged to depart, driven hence not only by stress of weather, but also by want of food. But again, although our British Islands cannot supply the swallow, and the swift, and the night-jar with the insects which they need, they *can* supply the redwing and the fieldfare with worms, and snails, and slugs, and hips and haws. And so we extend hospitality, as it were, to one class of birds, although compelled to refuse it to another, and the autumnal exodus is balanced by an autumnal immigration.

Much the same order is preserved by these travelling birds, both in their arrival and departure. The chiff-chaff and the willow-warbler ("hay-bird," the rustics call him) are generally the first to come, and usually the last to go. Sometimes one sees them even in the gusty days of March, and they linger on until the first frosts of autumn bring down the last remaining leaves from the trees. Close upon them follows the active little sand-martin, bound for the steep, soft-walled quarries wherein it can scoop out its odd little burrows with little exertion, and not much fear of molestation. Then one notices a house-martin or two, pioneers of the host which will appear a few days later; and then the fork-tailed swallows come; and last of all the swifts, which are seldom to be seen before the latter end of May.

The old ideas about these birds and their "hibernation" still linger, it seems, in some country districts. "One here" (Königsberg), wrote Master George Boukely, somewhere about the year 1620, "in

his net drew up a company or heape of swallows as big as a bushel, fastened by the legs and bills in one; which, being carried to their stoves, quickened and flew, and, coming again in the cold air, dyed." And in the pages of a popular almanack, published in the year of grace 1889, I find precisely the same statement made in all sober earnest — *i.e.*, that swallows do *not* migrate, but at the approach of winter conceal themselves deep down in ponds or streams, and there, clinging together in great clusters, lie torpid until the warm days of spring call them once more to active life! Strange how these false old notions live on in spite of daily spreading knowledge.

The swift is one of the very few birds which do not seem utterly exhausted by their long journey over the sea. Five minutes after its arrival it is hawking for flies as actively as if it had just left its nest after a long night's repose, for its astonishing physique is scarcely susceptible of fatigue, and the untiring muscles are like so many rods and strands of tempered steel. Swallows are less vigorous, and are generally glad enough to rest awhile on the rigging of any vessel which they may chance to meet. And when they reach the land at last one often sees them sitting in hundreds upon the shore, too wearied even to snap at the sand-flies which are flitting in thousands around them.

So with other birds as well. Their strength seems most accurately adjusted to the length of their journey, and the immigrants as they arrive *drop* upon the shore, utterly unable to fly for another hundred yards. If they chance to be blown out of their course by contrary winds, and find no place whereon to rest awhile, they perish. The gulls and the terns are better off, for they can sit on the sea itself and rest as long as they will. But the poor migrants, less favored by their structure, have no such power; and to them to stop in their flight, unless to perch awhile upon the yards of a friendly ship, means death.

How these birds find their way to the exact spot which they left six months before is a puzzle indeed; yet so they do. A marked pair of swallows have been known to return year after year to the very same spot beneath the eaves of the very same house, winging their way thither over some three or four thousand intervening miles of land and sea. What a marvellous memory the birds must have, thus to recollect all the details of a journey

which they have taken perhaps but once previously, and that six or seven months before! For they must surely carry with them a mental map of the country over which they have passed, clear and distinct in every detail, indelibly photographed upon their tiny brains. Wonderful as is the instinct of the carrier pigeon, which brings it safely home from a distance of hundreds of miles, it is as nothing compared with that of these tiny migrants, in whose case the hundreds of miles to be travelled are replaced by as many thousands, and which have to journey in the first instance to a bourne wholly unknown.

The nightingale, again, is a very regular migrant in its going and coming, and I have often thought that the same individual bird returns again and again to the same locality. When I was a boy there was a thick bramble bush near our house to which always resorted a nightingale of particularly rich and exquisite song. And we always looked out—or, rather, listened—for him on the twelfth of April. On the eleventh he was hardly ever there; once, I think, he delayed his coming until the fifteenth. But in other years, as a rule almost without exception, he began his song on the twelfth; and then we used to go out in the evening and whistle in answer to his song, while he would come nearer, and nearer, and nearer in his excitement, until at last he would sit in a hedge only some four or five yards away. For a nightingale is always extremely jealous of a rival, real or supposed, and can easily be brought to close quarters by any one who will remain motionless and carefully whistle in answer to the bird at every break in his song. No very accurate imitation of his own rich notes is needed, for a nightingale's ear is not at all discriminating, and his mind is simply filled with the fact that he has been challenged to a sort of musical duel. And that challenge he accepts with the utmost alacrity. At first, as one answers him, he merely tries experiments, singing fresh notes or fresh combinations, and then waiting to see whether *that* strain also will be imitated. But before very long he is sure to be roused to keener emulation, and then, in his excitement and—I fear—jealousy, he will sometimes come almost within arm's reach. But oh! the squall which he sets up when he finds out his mistake, and discovers that his supposed rival is not another nightingale at all, but that he has been taken in and deceived by a mere human biped! One would scarcely believe that it could proceed from a night-

ingale's throat, far less from that self-same throat from which, a few brief moments before, those floods of liquid melody were welling. Yet the bird soon forgets his disappointment and disgust, and the very next night one can go and entice him again in like manner.

It is an odd fact, by the way, that the cock nightingales—which alone sing, in spite of Shakespeare's opinion to the contrary*—precede the hen birds by several days, and appear to spend the interval before the arrival of the latter in practising their choicest melodies. For a nightingale's voice suffers somewhat during his ten months and a fortnight of silence, and a little preliminary practice is necessary before his lost powers come back to him. And full well do the bird-catchers know that if he is to thrive in captivity and freely pour out the beauties of his song, he must be trapped now, before he has chosen his mate; for if he be taken after his choice is made, he will surely pine away and die. So they tempt him with mealworms, whose attractions he cannot resist; and then for him it is good-bye to the woods forever.

Although the song of the nightingale usually ceases by the end of May or the beginning of June—for after the olive-brown eggs are hatched, and his mate has no longer to be comforted during her weary vigils, his voice breaks and goes—the bird remains with us until well on into the summer, and seldom takes his departure until quite the latter end of August. By that time many of the migrants are going or gone. The cuckoo is generally the first to leave:—

In July he begins to fly,
Come August go he must.

The brown, hairy caterpillars—"woolly bears," we called them—on which he loves to feed have all "spun up" in their silken cradles, and turned to pupæ, for which he does not care at all. The climate, too, tries him a little, for he seems to know that the cooling nights will soon grow cooler still. And so off he goes, pioneer of the great autumnal exodus, back to his South African home, where hairy caterpillars are always to be found, and floods, and hail, and snow, and bitter east wind have no terrors.

Then goes the nightingale, quietly and unobtrusively. One does not miss him.

* The nightingale, if *she* should sing by day,
When every goose is cackling, would be thought
No better a musician than the wren.

(Merchant of Venice, Act v, Scene i.)

for his song has been silent for weeks. A few days later the swift, delicate of constitution, and intolerant of cold night dews, leaves its friends the swallows and the martins, and sets out also upon its long pilgrimage. The nightjar, too, goes about the same time; and strangely bold does it become for the while, and curiously indifferent to the usually detested daylight. Once, in this autumn season, I knew a travelling nightjar to come and sit upon a window ledge while the sun was high in the heavens; and there it quietly rested for some little time, oblivious of the fact that two of us were standing and watching it, not more than a foot or two away. When it had rested sufficiently it turned its head towards the sea, which lay about a mile away, and set off upon its journey. And this was in the brilliant sunshine of a hot August day.

Next one fails to notice the pretty, active little flycatchers, which all the summer long have been busily hawking for flies and such minute life-atoms before our very windows; for they are confiding little fellows, these flycatchers, and not at all afraid of man at moderately close quarters. And then one no longer sees a whitethroat flit out of the hedge and dive in again a few yards farther on. The cornrake is silent too, for he is over the sea by now, and comfortably settled in his winter quarters. And then the swallows and the martins begin to congregate together in those ominous gatherings which are so sure a precursor of autumn; and one knows that in a few brief hours they will have left us also. And when *they* go very few of our summer visitors are left; and the shortening days and the fast-falling leaves tell only too surely of the bleak and chilly days at hand.

The chaff-chaff is almost the last to leave us; for it is a robust little being, and can stand a good deal of cold weather, and so remains until it has seen almost the last of its fellow-emigrants depart. But the kestrel is the last of all, for *he* goes not until near upon December, when the ground is frozen hard, and mice do not venture from their holes. And even then he leaves a few of his kind behind him, representatives of the family, so to speak, while he himself is absent abroad.

And while all this company have been departing, a band of substitutes have been silently taking their places. Birds from the far north, these, most of them, hardy of constitution and inured to cold, and yet not able to endure the biting winter frosts of the lands where they hie them in sum-

mer. But some come from the south, like the woodcock, which is regular almost to a day — the 20th of October — and stops to rest for a brief space by the sea before travelling on to inland woods. Terribly exhausted they are, some of them; so exhausted that they can be knocked down with a stick, or even captured by hand. For they have not the iron muscles of the swift and the sea-gulls, but can just swing their way over the sea, and no more. And so a short sojourn by the shore is necessary, that strength may be regained for the last part of the long journey.

The short-eared owl, or woodcock owl, comes with them, although it is not of them, and then for a time has a very un-owl-like way of getting into turnip fields, and so being flushed with the partridges. This owl, like the kestrel in winter, always leaves some of its number behind when it goes over the sea in the spring. Strange, this division of forces, the one band going off regularly to the Continent to nest, and the other band as regularly staying behind.

The fieldfares and the redwings, most social of birds, come down from their homes in the north, banished for six long months and more by the icy hand of winter. And so they visit us, and hunt in the field for slugs and worms, and for hips and haws in the hedges. And they always come in such flocks; "not in single spies, but in battalions." They have no idea of solitude at all, but must fly in company, and feed in company, and roost in company all the winter long. And when spring comes round again they return to their northern haunts, and nest in company there.

But sometimes even our comparatively mild winters are too severe for the fieldfare and the redwing, and then they betake themselves, first to the sheltered valleys on our southern shores, where the sharp north wind may justly be expected to lose its sting and bitterness, and then, if still the frost should hold, to lands more southern still. But it is seldom that one does not see the pretty, speckle-breasted birds all the winter long; and good cause indeed has the farmer to bless them for their coming, when he thinks — if ever he does so think — of all the snails and slugs which they have captured for him.

Snipes, too, come over in mid-autumn — great snipes, common snipes, tiny jack-snipes, and other snipes too very often — by way of reinforcement to those whom early in the year they left behind them. For some of these birds — like naturalized foreigners — for family or other reasons

see fit to make our country the land of their adoption, and go not away in the spring when all their fellows depart. And in early summer days, as one walks through the low marsh lands, one sees these settlers flying aloft, and perseveringly "drumming," in that strange way of theirs, high up in the air above. How or why they do this I do not know at all. I do not think that any one has quite settled that question. But probably the vibration of the rapidly quivering wings is the actual cause of the sound, for it is only uttered — if one may justly employ that term — as the bird flutters downwards in his descent. Meanwhile the hen is sitting closely upon her eggs, or zealously guarding her newly hatched young. And he who catches sight of her will only do so by purest accident.

According to M. Fatio, who recently read a paper on the subject before the Physiological Society of Geneva, the snipe is an amateur surgeon in a small way, and not only dresses any wounds which it may receive with down plucked from its own body, but even manufactures splints wherewith to secure a broken limb. According to this observer, who brought forward a quantity of evidence in order to corroborate his statements, the stem of a feather serves as the actual splint, and is fastened to the leg by means of a long strip of narrow-leaved grass wound tightly round and round. And the bird is also said to take great care properly to "set" the bone before applying the bandage. In one case brought forward by M. Fatio a poor wounded snipe, shot in both legs and lost for the time, was found next day to have applied such splints to both its fractured limbs, and on its beak, clogged with coagulated blood, was still some of the down which it had applied as a dressing.

Among the smaller birds, the snow bunting and the brambling are strictly winter visitors; but the former, being a hardy Norseman, is usually content with Scottish weather, and only comes south now and then. The brambling goes everywhere, and is far more commonly to be met with; for it is a gregarious bird, like the fieldfare and the redwing, and travels in large flocks. But one is very apt to mistake it for its first cousin the chaffinch. The two birds are so very much alike in size, and color, and habits. And as they are very good friends, as near relations should be, and feed and live together on perfectly amicable terms, one cannot well be blamed for confusing the

two together, and looking on the whole flock as composed of chaffinches only.

But ducks, and certain of the marsh-loving birds, form the main body of the army of winter migrants. They come in great variety, and also in some abundance. Not quite so commonly as they did in days of old, however; that is not to be expected, for we are so fond of draining our old fen-lands, and growing corn and turnips where was nothing but ooze and slime, and naturally the ducks do not like the changed condition of affairs. Where are they to find worms and water-snails if we will persist in drying up all the mud? So that when one goes into the fenny-land of Norfolk, and engages the natives in friendly converse, one hears much about ducks in the past, but not much about ducks in the present. But then the fen-land in Norfolk forms one of those districts where every one goes out with a gun. The Wild Birds' Protection Act is practically a dead letter, for who is to enforce its regulation when the nearest policeman is fifteen or twenty miles away, and the country all around is a practical wilderness? So that one hears the gun throughout the spring and summer, and every year the birds become fewer and fewer. One sedge-warbler in a long day's outing, when one ought to have seen or heard fifty or sixty! That was my record two years ago, and other birds were scarce in proportion. The pity of it — the pity of it! And we cannot replace them, cannot bring them back. Our marsh birds are most surely doomed, and twenty years hence, perhaps, will be but casual visitors, like the avocet and the stork and the spoonbill, which once bred commonly in our islands, and now are but seldom seen.

That is why the autumnal immigration of our marshland birds has something of sadness about it; for one feels that they will not so come much longer, and that every year is reducing their numbers. What *will* our bird-fauna be like in the time to come? The hawks are going, and the owls are going, and the kingfisher is going, and one seldom sees a magpie or a jay. Terns and sea-gulls are shot in thousands, that their wings may be used to "decorate" ladies' bonnets, or from mere love of killing; and starlings, and robins, and sparrows, and finches are shot, and their plumage dyed to resemble that of their gaudier fellows. The pity of it — the pity of it! Shall we find out our mistake before it is too late? Or shall we live at last in a birdless world, in which the insect is master of all?

From All The Year Round.

THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD.

AMONG the ever-diminishing number of institutions which connect the life of the present day with that of a more picturesque past, the Yeomen of the Royal Guard, popularly known as "Beefeaters," are conspicuous. There are few prettier sights in London than that of the little band of yeomen in their quaint costume, filing through the Park and Mall on a drawing-room day, to their duty in the palace. There has been much learned discussion among etymologists as to the correct meaning of the word *beefeater*, by which name the Yeomen of the Guard have long been known.

Some have considered it derived from the French *buffetier*, with reference to waiting at the royal table. But though it was the practice of the yeomen to carry in the dishes for the royal table, it seems that the duty of officiating at the buffet, or sideboard, devolved on an officer of superior rank, probably on a gentleman usher; at present the generally accepted opinion is that the simple meaning of the word is the right one, viz., an eater of beef. The corps was established by Henry the Seventh at his coronation in 1485, as a body-guard, "on which day," says Lord Verulam, "as if the crown upon his head had put peril into his thoughts, he did institute for the better securing of his person a band of fifty archers, under a captain, to attend by the name of Yeomen of the Guard." These men, according to the chronicler Hall, were to be "hardy, strong, and of agilite," and he adds that it was thought the king must have borrowed the idea from the court of France, "for men remember not any king of England, before that tyme, which used such a furniture of daily souldjourns." This was very likely the case, as Louis the Eleventh of France organized a similar body of archers of the guard called, "La Petite Garde de son Corps," in 1475. Hentzner, in his "Travels," tells us that the guard of yeomen was to be composed of the tallest and stoutest men that could be found in all England. Such stress having been laid on the size and strength of the men, it has been argued that they would naturally have been great eaters of beef, the national dish of the day. Moreover, beef was cheap, for when the butchers under Henry the Eighth were compelled to sell their mutton at three-farthings a pound, the price of beef was only one halfpenny. In fact, one always imagines the diet of our forefathers to have been composed largely of roast

beef and mustard, varied by huge capons and venison pasties, and an almost unlimited quantity of beer! However this may have been, there can be no doubt that the new Yeomen of the Guard were popularly supposed to have very excellent appetites, as may be gathered from the allusions to them in various old works. Cowley, in his poem called "The Wish," seems to refer to the yeomen when he writes, "and chins of beef innumerable send me, or from the stomach of the guard defend me." Again, in the old play of "Histrio Mastix," published about 1610, one of the characters — Mavortius — dismisses his serving men with the words:—

Begone yee greedy beefeaters: y're best
The Callis Cormorants from Dover roade
Are not so chargeable as you to feed,

which helps us to trace back the use of the word *beefeater*, as a person of large appetite, to the beginning of the seventeenth century. In another old work, Earle's "Microcosmography," an individual is referred to as "a terrible farmer on a piece of beef, and you may hope to stave the guard off sooner." Finally, a certain grand duke of Tuscany, Cosmo by name, who paid a visit to the court of Charles the Second in 1669, mentions the Yeomen of the Guard in his "Travels." "They are called," he says, "in jest, beefeaters, that is, eaters of beef, of which a considerable portion is allowed them every day." Under Henry the Eighth, the number of yeomen was increased to two hundred, of whom one hundred were mounted. When on active service, many were added, for at the siege of Terouenne in 1513, the king, we read, was attended by "six hundred yeomen of his garde, all in white gaberdines and cappes," and when Tourney fell into his hands, among other forces, four hundred archers of the guard were kept for its protection.

In the year 1520, one hundred Yeomen of the Guard accompanied the new lord deputy, the Earl of Surrey, to Ireland — a fact which is noteworthy, as being one of the very few instances of their being employed in any other capacity than as a royal body-guard. In fact, the occasions on which they served out of England are not very numerous, one of the last being in 1544, when we hear of their attending the king at the siege of Boulogne. These yeomen, consisting as they did of picked men, were famous archers and foremost in all games of skill. On a certain occasion, in 1515, we read of King Henry and his Queen Katharine being on a visit to Green-

wich: "And as they rode towards Shooters Hill they espied a company of tall yeomen, clothed all in green, with green hoods and bows and arrows, to the number of two hundred. All of these archers were of the King's Guard, and had thus apparelled themselves to make solace to the king." One of the yeomen at their head styled himself Robin Hood, who, after the shooting match was over, regaled their Majesties with venison and wine, "to their great contentation;" and then escorted them back to Greenwich.

Edward the Sixth took great pride in the corps, and himself joined at times in their sports and exercises. In 1552, when the young king went in state to Sussex, the guard had given them one hundred and twenty-six livery bows and twenty-four gilt javelins "for their furniture," or, as we should say, equipment, together with one hundred and twenty-five sheaves of arrows, which, with the cases and girdles, cost thirty-three pounds six shillings and eightpence of the money of that day. In 1527 they had been given a livery of scarlet for the first time.

Queen Mary expended a large sum in the ornamentation of their uniform, as much as one thousand pounds being given to one Peter Richardson, "maker of the spangles for the rich coats of the Queen's Highness's guard." Again seven thousand one hundred and seventy-five ounces of gilt spangles were employed for the embroidery of the liveries of her Majesty's Guard, footmen, and messengers.

Elizabeth kept the number of yeomen in ordinary at about two hundred; but, with an eye to economy, reduced the number of extra yeomen to one hundred and seven. Hentzner was present at Greenwich, in 1598, and saw Elizabeth dine in public, in the usual stately fashion. "The Yeomen of the Guard," he says, "entered bareheaded, clothed in scarlet with a golden rose upon their backs, bringing in at each turn a course of twenty dishes."

The Yeomen of the Guard appear to have always been a very well-behaved body of men, for instances of crime being imputed to them are few and far between. In 1511, however, we hear of a certain member of the King's Guard being executed for murder. Although high in the king's favor, he "slew wilfully a servant of my Lord Willoughby's, in the palace at Westminster; wherefore the king, abhorring that deed and setting aside all affection, caused him to be hanged in the palace at Westminster, where he hong two daies in example of other." A few years

later, we learn that one Richard Smith was committed to the Marshalsea for spreading abroad "lewd and seditious books;" a curious offence for a member of the Royal Guard. Before being sent to prison, his coat was taken from his back and he was discharged the service.

James the First had two hundred Yeomen of the Guard, some of whom were to attend on Prince Henry. They were diligently to keep guard in the great chamber, suffering no stranger to pass. It was also directed that two of them, with halberds, should attend at the gate to assist the porters to execute their office, and the orders to be observed in time of infection, and on other occasions. They were to be especially careful to keep the great chamber free from ten of the clock in the morning until one, and from four in the evening until seven, that his Highness might quietly take his repast in the Presence Chamber. We do not hear of them during the Commonwealth. Probably enough they were suppressed, together with other vain shows and institutions, only to be revived at the Restoration. Charles the Second reduced their number, in 1668, to one hundred, and supernumeraries were placed on half-pay, amounting to fifteen pounds per annum. Until this period the captain received no fee or salary, his only allowance having been an official gown. The office, however, was generally combined with some more remunerative appointment. Charles the Second now granted the captain a salary of one thousand pounds a year—later on raised to one thousand two hundred pounds. The captaincy is now always held by a peer.

For many years the men who mounted guard at St. James's Palace each day (about thirty in number) had fixed rations provided for them on a very liberal scale, as the following menu will show: These thirty yeomen were allowed twenty-four pounds of beef, eighteen pounds of mutton, and sixteen pounds of veal, together with thirty-six loaves and two pounds of butter; twenty-seven gallons of beer were allowed in winter, and one gallon extra in the more thirsty days of summer. The dinner was cooked in the royal kitchen, and served in two messes, one for each guard. There were extra allowances on special occasions, such as haunches of venison twice a year, five geese on Michaelmas day, and three plum-puddings every Sunday. Whenever the guns fired a *feu de joie*, as on the birthdays of members of the royal family, which were called "pitcher days," wine was added to the

usual fare. A curious note for 4th June, 1802, informs us that "no claret was allowed, as there was no ball;" and, again, in 1811, on the queen's birthday, owing to the illness of George the Third, it is remarked that no wine was allowed. This table allowance was abolished in 1813 on the score of expense, the men when on duty being given board wages instead. According to some new orders issued by the Duke of Manchester, the captain of the yeomen in 1738, it would seem that some of the men had adopted a slovenly way of dressing, which brought a sharp reprimand from their commanding officer, who seems to have had a great opinion of the merits of pipeclay or its equivalent. One of the clauses is as follows: "Whereas it has been observed of late time that several of the guard, to the great dishonor of the service, have been very negligent in keeping themselves neat and clean while they have been on duty, having their shoes, stockings, and gloves dirty, and their hair and wigs unpowdered, and not wearing the gloves and stockings provided them by his Majesty, and having been negligent in keeping their partisans clean. It is ordered that the officer in waiting shall take care that no such neglect shall occur again, etc." Any yeoman offending in these respects might, in future, be discharged from his wait, and was liable to forfeit his salary.

As regards the costume and equipment of the Yeomen of the Guard, it has been already mentioned that a red livery was first given them in the eighteenth year of Henry the Eighth, before which time they appear to have worn white. A rose was embroidered on the front and back of the coat; after the accession of James the First the thistle was combined with the rose, and the shamrock was added at the Union. The stockings have been of different colors, blue, grey, and white. The scarlet hose and Elizabethan ruff were restored to them by George the Fourth. Rosettes of red leather were given them, in 1785, instead of shoe-buckles. The present rosettes are made of red, white, and blue ribbon. The yeomen were first armed with bows and arrows, which gradually yielded to the arquebus. Sometimes they carried pikes and partisans. In the reign of Queen Anne they gave up the arquebus and retained the partisan, which had been introduced at the Restoration. In 1743, when the yeomen attended George the Second to Hanover, they were armed with partisans when the king halted, on other occa-

sions with carbines. For many years the places in the corps were bought and sold, large fees being paid on appointment. In the beginning of the present century the captain's fee was three hundred and fifteen pounds, that of the clerk of the cheque ten pounds ten shillings, captain's servant sixteen shillings, and so on; while five pounds were charged for "cloaks" and the same sum for "treat," a sum of two shillings and sixpence was monopolized by "sword" and two shillings by "quilt." In 1835 the system of selling and purchasing these various situations was abolished, together with the fees on appointment. The chief posts were henceforth to be filled by officers on half-pay, while the privates were to be non-commissioned officers not below the rank of sergeant. The force at present consists of one hundred and forty yeomen, together with a captain, lieutenant, ensign, four exons, and a clerk of the cheque who acts as adjutant. The word "exon" is probably derived from an old French word signifying "exempt," and is applied to a resident officer who sleeps at St. James's as commander of the yeomen on duty, and is exempted from the usual guard-mounting, and the like. The clerk of the cheque was first appointed by Henry the Eighth, and was doubtless employed in keeping a record of the fines imposed as penalties for any breaches of discipline. Six of the corps are styled yeomen hangers from it being their duty in former times to put up and take down the royal tapestry or arras, while two others are called yeomen bed-goers from their being intrusted with the care of the king's bedding, and the like. Besides attending on royalty, other duties have at different times fallen to the lot of the yeomen guard. Such was that of arresting persons of high station. Thus Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, who fell a victim to Wolsey's enmity, was attacked by Sir Henry Marney, captain of the king's guard, with one hundred of his yeomen, and conveyed to the Tower; and, by the irony of fate, it was by a body of Yeomen of the Guard that the great cardinal himself was brought from Sheffield to the Tower. Another of their duties was to carry the bodies of deceased members of the royal family to the grave. The last occasion on which they were thus employed was in 1817, on the death of Princess Charlotte, daughter of George the Fourth, when one of their number was injured. Since this they have only attended at the ceremony of lying-in-state. During the Chartist demonstrations in

1848, the whole available force of beef-eaters was stationed at St. James's Palace. Before closing this brief account of the oldest corps in England, some notice must be taken of the warders of the Tower. They were never really incorporated with the Yeomen of the Guard, though from the reign of Edward the Sixth they have worn the same picturesque costume—the design of which, it has been said, we owe to Holbein. The warders are appointed solely by the constable of the Tower, to whom the lord chamberlain applies whenever he needs the services of beefeaters from the Tower at any state ceremony. Under James the First it was ordered that twenty-five should always remain within

the Tower to the keeping of the gates from their first opening in the morning until their closing at night, and that they should each carry a halbert or bill whosoever they went within the said Tower. They do not wear the shoulder-belt, as they never carried carbines. The old ceremony of the "keys" is still kept up. Within the Bloody Gate nightly, at eleven P.M., the sentry of the guard challenges the chief warder who is in possession of the keys of the fortress, "Who goes there?" "Keys." "Whose keys?" "Queen Victoria's keys." Thereupon the warder exclaims: "God bless Queen Victoria." To this the soldiers respond, the keys pass on, and the guard disperse.

THE CURATIVE EFFECT OF MUSIC. — The alleged curative effect of music has afforded a topic of discussion for more than the proverbial nine days, and is still a matter for remark. Meanwhile, proof upon proof of the antiquity of the subject accumulates. A writer who dates from Guy's Hospital, quotes a medical treatise written by a Spanish lady as far back as the time of Queen Elizabeth, in which music is represented as "that which tends most to comfort, rejoice, and strengthen the brain," and as a disarmer of epilepsy. We ourselves called attention, some time ago, to a pamphlet published anonymously in 1749, and entitled "Reflections on Ancient and Modern Musick, with the Application to the Cure of Diseases." This work, however, is later by twenty years than a little book, "*Medicina Musica; or, A Mechanical Essay on the Effects of Singing, Music, and Dancing on Human Bodies*," written by Richard Browne, an apothecary of Oldham. It appears from the preface that Mr. Browne first issued his treatise anonymously, but was afterwards persuaded to publish a new edition with his name attached. The speciality of the work is its recommendation of the exercise of singing as useful in certain disorders. In discussing this point the author lays down a number of propositions, beginning, "There is a sympathy betwixt the soul and animal spirits," and going on to assert that animal spirits regulate the action of the heart; that the pressure of air in the lungs caused by singing more effectually removes deleterious matter from the blood, and so on. We cannot follow the "ingenious" writer's arguments; but it is curious that the eminent philosopher who lately advised the St. Cecilia Society to try lively airs upon patients was anticipated by the Oldham apothecary who wrote: "The singing of some certain melan-

choly, languishing tunes does, instead of elevating the spirits, rather tend to their depression, and, therefore, in order to enjoy the pleasing and profitable effects that I have proposed in singing, we are to make choice of such tunes as, having life and vigor in their composition, are adapted to cheer and elevate the soul and invigorate the motion of the spirits." Apart from the good effects of singing upon the singer, this old writer specially recommends music as helpful in attacks of "the spleen or vapors." Here a soft adagio, according to Mr. Browne, would be "very improper, as by its melodious strains it only tends to soothe our melancholy, and bring a languishing upon the spirits that are already drooping." The author pins his faith to a "brisk allegro," which he proclaims to be "of prodigious service in the cure of apoplexies, lethargies, etc." The St. Cecilians, we understand, put their trust in soft and gentle strains. They must take care not to bring a languishing upon the spirit, though the patient may prefer it to any results derived from the "airy, sprightly strokes of an allegro."

Daily Telegraph.

MEDIOCRE VERSE IN EPIGRAM. — George Sand's library, or at least what was left of it after the death of M. Maurice Sand, has been sold by public auction. The collection was in many respects disappointing, but it contained a volume of minor verse, on the fly leaf of which Alexander Dumas *filis* had written the following epigram: —

Voilà ce que, sur ma parole,
Je pense de ton livre obscur:
La poésie en est trop molle,
Et le papier en est trop dur.

This book fetched fifty francs.

